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GOLD AND THE GIRL

Or, A CATTLE MAN'S GRIT

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CHAPTER I.

THE SERPENT IN EDEN.

EIGHTEEN!"

Before the residence in Newport of a multi-millionaire, whose costly hospitality was a byword in the press, a tall footman was shouting the carriage calls of his master's guests.

"Ain't he handsome, Minnie?" a village gigglet, while she and her companion struggled to keep their position at the edge of the bronze grill through which they peered. From this vantage point an enticing view could be had of the brilliantly-lighted entrance of the house, from which emanated an atmosphere of gayety.

But the splendor of the footman could not long hold the curious crowd from the superior attraction of the toilettes of the women guests, who lightly descended the carpeted stairs and were whisked away in their motors, leaving behind a gratifying fragrance of rare scents.

"Look!" whispered Minnie, indicating a matron and a young girl of charming appearance. "I wonder who that is?"

"That's Mrs. Rexhill and her daughter, Miss Helen." The woman who offered the information was patently pleased to have the opportunity herself, for Miss Helen Rexhill was one of the beauties of the social season. "My sister's got a friend as is one of their parlor maids."

Something might have been argued as to the Rexhills' fitness for social eminence from the self-conscious tightening of Mrs. Rexhill's lips, but the crowd was too ravished to be critical of the show of wealth which the women made, as they waited upon their purring motor.

"Gee, but ain't that swell!" ecstatically murmured Minnie, as the landaulet slowly made the passage of the grilled gate, and the deep brown eyes of Miss Helen, who had heard the remark, lingered for a moment in the gaze of the little villager. A smile, mingled of gratification and disdain, hovered over the lips of the social favorite, as the car shot forward into the roadway.

"Well, that's over," said Mrs. Rexhill grimly.

"Yes."

At the girl's lazily intoned response, her mother snorted indignantly, revealing lines in her face which hinted at the truth, that her life had not always been spent in the lap of luxury. If the Senator's rise in the affairs of the nation had been due, as his enemies averred, to venal politics, his wife's social rise had been no less fostered by chicanery, and in their own ways, each bore scars of the conflict. Until lately, their success had seemed to Mrs. Rexhill well worth the struggle, for society, to a woman, stood ready to admit the supremacy of her position and of her husband's Czarlike political dominance. But, in her heart, she knew that her tenure was that of wealth alone, without which her friends would fall upon her social carcass, like wolves, to rend it; and only that day, the Senator, with gray lips, had confessed to her that he faced financial ruin.

In the first shock of her horror, he had gone on to say that he hoped to rise superior to the crisis, as he had mastered everything else in his life, but even her confidence in him had been shaken. She could not understand how the defeat of the party in the last presidential election could have so riddled him. The dreadful shadow rested upon themselves alone, because he had insisted that Helen should not be told of it. Mrs. Rexhill had had to yield to him in this, over her protest.

"No, Martha, no! I know what you have in mind, my dear. But your ambitions for Helen, in that respect, are for you, and her, and the man in the case. I give to her, but I don't make through her. Now, let's have no more of that."

He had declared that all he needed was time to bring to a head certain well-laid plans in the West, from out of which he had sprung to eminence, when he would be wealthier than before; but with the intolerance of his old, scepter-bearing majesty, he had refused to explain to her what these plans were. His wife had the impression, however, that they involved an impending contest between the sheep and the cattle interests in Wyoming. She had heard the matter mentioned in discussions between him and Helen, for the girl was his confidante in many respects, and had feared injury to the prospects of a young rancher, Gordon Wade, in whom she had been interested for a long while. The name of Wade, who was a clean and manly young fellow, was intolerable to Mrs. Rexhill, who meant that her lovely daughter should make a brilliant marriage. Indeed, the one solace which the mother derived from the trouble which threatened them, lay in the possibility that these two young people would be alienated from each other.

She had gone with Helen to the dinner, from which they were leaving, buoyed up by the thought of so happy an outcome, and was more than pleased when Helen was taken in to the table by young Maxwell Frayne, who had been attentive to her in Washington during the whole of the past season there. Upon the prospect of this match, Mrs. Rexhill staked her highest hope, for the Traynes were not only colossally wealthy, but well-born, and such a marriage would forever assure the position of the Rexhill family in society. In the light of such advantage, she was eager to overlook the personal drawbacks of young Frayne, a callow idler, who did nothing with such assiduity that one could never expect anything better of him. The possibility of ruin made him seem all the more desirable to Mrs. Rexhill, and she was especially intolerant of her daughter's coolness toward him.

As the landaulet swept on, Mrs. Rexhill's heart was full of bitterness, for on this most significant of evenings, Helen had been more than usually unresponsive to Frayne. That the girl's auburn hair and smoldering brown eyes made her almost ethereally lovely in the half-light of the car, was a further cross to the mother, because of the wasted opportunity implied by such good looks. Like Pygmalion, Mrs. Rexhill could have prayed to Venus to breathe into the Galatea-like loveliness of the daughter, a glow of warmth for Maxwell Frayne, who so evidently loved her. She was even considering the advisability of telling Helen of the condition of her father's affairs, above his admonition to the contrary, when that young woman's patience gave way.

"Mother, you are in a villainous humor. What on earth is the use of going to these tiresome dinners, if they are going to wear upon you so?"

Mrs. Rexhill fumed until the air seemed charged with the current of her anger.

"Do you suppose I go for my own pleasure?" she acidulously demanded. Helen, don't—don't annoy me further. I'm not in a mood to put up with it. You know what I mean."

"Surely." The girl's soft laughter disposed of her mother's attempt at authority. There was too much of the Senator in his child to brook that sort of thing. "You go, mother, to give me opportunities, and it's very nice of you. Only, if I don't see the opportunity this time, you mustn't blame me. It's scarcely seeable. It's so little and thin."

Mrs. Rexhill's snort of displeasure was not an agreeable sound.

"We may as well understand each other, mother. I'm never going to marry Maxwell, so give up hope."

"It's likely we shall have to give up all hope, if you don't marry him," said her mother, with a significance that only she could appreciate.

"Really? I don't see why. Anyway, I couldn't marry him, no matter what depended on it, and fortunately nothing does. Mother, imagine him in pajamas!"

"Helen!"

"Shocking, isn't it?" The girl's voice rippled with amusement. "But the thought's not so shocking as the reality would be. The man I am to acknowledge as my better half must be half of something to start with. I can tell you, mother. Half of nothing is nothing, isn't it? That's what Maxwell is, just nothing at all."

"Nothing!" Mrs. Rexhill turned in her seat to face her daughter. "The Traynes of Frayne Manor are nothing?"

Helen nodded gravely.

"They all are," she said judicially. "I haven't met a real man—a real young man—this season. I haven't. I tell you, mother, you think we've gone up in the world. I don't. I think we've gone back. I know I have. I'm not half the human being I used to be back in Denver, and the worst of it is that this sort of luxury and running about has gotten into my blood, until I can't do without it. I'm crazy to be going all the time, and the more I go, the more empty-headed, idle people I meet, and the unhappier they make me."

"Oh, for mercy's sake, don't cultivate such moods." Mrs. Rexhill spoke impatiently. "You judge Maxwell too harshly."

"Do I? Well, after today, let's not

jndge him at all. That's what I want to do, just to forget him. He's not worth thinking about. You'll not be ashamed of the man I marry, mother, at least not after I've had him to myself a while, but there's got to be something in him to work upon. You are always so angry when I speak of Gordon, as though I meant to spend the rest of my days on a ranch. Why, I don't at all. I simply couldn't. I'd make him come East, and perhaps we'd go to London and take a house there—"

"A pretty figure Gordon Wade would cut in London."

Mrs. Rexhill's scorn was doubly weighted with the anguish of her disappointment. One of the qualities in her husband, which had contributed vastly to his success, and which he had transmitted to his daughter, was his stubborn purpose. Realizing that her ambition was likely thwarted, and urged on by her distress over their financial situation, she was less diplomatic than she had ever been. The name of the young rancher had been so frequently spoken of late in the Rexhill household to his influence she traced her daughter's unsatisfactory mood, the thought of him was the last spur that the Senator's spirit could brook. In her anger, she chose to ignore the fine manhood of Wade, and only by remembering his good qualities, which stood in need of no defense, could she keep her own imperious nature under control.

"It is utterly absurd and childish," Mrs. Rexhill fumed. "Just a romantic fancy, an ideal that has grown during your absence from the West. You and Mr. Wade have met only three times in the past four years, and yet you imagine that he is still in love with you. Why should he be?"

"Why shouldn't he be?"

In the light of the girl's rare physical beauty, the mother found her own question unanswerable, and at her confusion, Helen laughed.

"Oh, you imagine that you are quite suited to each other, I suppose," she said night. I dare say, you kneel in your silk-and-point nightgown and say your prayers with his plaid shirt and chaps. The very idea of his giving you a picture of himself dressed as a common cowpuncher—"

"Oh!" said Helen lightly. "I'd rather have a cowpuncher in chaps than a monkey in ridiculous knee breeches. I'd get an evening suit on him soon enough. But, mother, let's not go on talking about it. What's the use?"

Mrs. Rexhill would not be so easily appeased.

"It's nothing but degradation for you; giving up your heart to him; sharing it. I haven't the least doubt, with dance-hall women—"

"Mother!"

Mrs. Rexhill was too furious to heed the challenging ring in her daughter's voice. Convention, of all things, was her shibboleth, but anxiety and disappointment were carrying her beyond herself.

"What else has he to do of evenings? Do you suppose that he sits at the ranch? I doubt it. Most likely, he goes into the town, and you have heard of Moondance. It's a little Port Said from all accounts, without the canal."

"Mother, will you stop talking, or shall I get out of the carriage?" The girl lightly opened the door of the landau-let, which had slowed down at a road crossing while the coachman and footman flashing eyes lay her father's dominant nature.

Mrs. Rexhill reached over and closed the door.

"I will stop," she said, with an effort. "But all of my hopes and ambitions have centered in you, in the wish that you should be happy. It is—bitter."

"I know that, mother, and sometimes, I think you don't understand what happiness means."

"Reality!"

Mrs. Rexhill's laughter rattled harshly in her throat as the motor drew up before a handsome ranch-house where she intended to look in for a few moments upon a social function.

"I'm not going in," she said shortly. "I'm not feeling fit for it."

"As you please."

"You can say that I have a headache. I'll wait here in the car."

A woman's confidence in a man is largely made up of her knowledge of his opportunities for wrong-doing, and because Helen Rexhill was aware that, until lately at least, there had not been a presentable looking woman within many miles of Moondance, she had felt safe in the command of Gordon Wade's heart. There were the dance-hall women, of course, but she knew that their sort would be attracted by him, but as her mother knew it, beneath her anger. But there is no more prolific seed than the seed of doubt, and sitting there in the car in the dark, she began to reflect that his recent letters to her had seemed less warm. Of course, it was quite possible that some woman visitor, perhaps a neighboring rancher, had caught his woman-starved fancy.

As the girl thought of that, her fingers became subconsciously clinched, and when she awoke to the pressure of her nails in her palms, she smiled a little at her own vehemence. It was surely too absurd to be punishing herself in Newport over dream vagaries of what Gordon Wade might be doing in Moondance, Wyoming. She was thinking though, that she would like to know just what he was doing, when her father's ponderous figure was framed in the doorway of the car.

"Hello!" He wafted cigar fragrance toward her. "Didn't expect me, eh? What are you doing, sitting out here? Where's your mother?" Accepting her explanation, he said that he had recognized the car in passing. "Well, I'll get in with you, and we'll all go home together."

Heavy though the landaulet was, it creaked beneath his weight as he got in; bowing, too, it would seem, before the majesty of his personality; majesty in the sense of ponderosity; the majesty of the elephant, the rhinoceros, the leviathan in any walk of life. When Senator Rexhill spoke quietly, his voice rumbled in his throat like the warning of a volcano about to erupt, and when he spoke in passion, the eruption seemed a volcanic fact. At his outbursts of rage, which he counted among his greatest assets, ordinary folk looked at each other with startled eyes and prepared to flee; but in his moments of placidity, these same folk were wont to edge back close to his side, as though they derived a sense of security from his bulk. Bitterly assailed in the press, especially by the cartoonists, who well knew how to penetrate the chinks in the armor of his hide, for his benevolent and grandiose ideas to his private needs, those who were willing to brave his harsh speech and bullying manner, found that for the sake of expressing their hostility to him, were certainly few indeed. Men called him Cæsar, and Cæsar he had stalked through the halls of the nation.

And yet, like many marauders in public life, he was capable, on occasion, of his nature, which he kept for his home. Colossal though his success had been, when measured by the standard of his conduct, the gratification of it was nothing to him compared to his love for his daughter and the satisfaction he felt at her pride in him. Tonight, his nerves were beyond the solace of even the strong cigar, and the dissatisfaction and impudence of ruin was less important to his mind than the necessity of concealing from him the storm under which he labored. For her sake, even more than for her mother's, or his own, he had determined to make his personal liberty on a hazard, which his judgment told him exceeded the limits of his own immunity from the processes of law.

"What were you thinking of, sitting here alone?" he tenderly asked, patting Helen's hand.

She looked at him with laughing eyes. "Moondance."

"Gordon Wade, eh? Well, I wouldn't think of him too much. Better let that pass. You've outgrown it."

"I hope so."

The Senator sighed.

"Mother said he was probably meeting other girls, and forgetting me. That made me angry."

"Well——" He smiled upon her, fairly fatuous that his daughter's wrath had been begotten of himself." I reckon your mother's about right. Gordon's a likely looking fellow, and I've heard of nothing against him, except he isn't good enough for you. You don't care so much about him, do you?"

"Oh, don't I?" She viewed her father through half-closed lids, in a pretty, agitated way. There was more for him that if I thought there was another girl, I'd go out to Moondance tomorrow. I'd make you drop everything and take me."

Her father lightly tweaked her cheek.

"You would, eh? Well, maybe I'll have to go out there, anyway. But do you know what Moondance is like—a rough, frontier town?"

"I shouldn't care about that."

"No, I suppose not. You've got too much of your father in you to balk at a few difficulties. There's somebody else out there, who'd be glad to see you, too. Race Moran."

"Mr. Moran!"

The sudden change in the girl's tone from passion to scorn caused the Senator a twinge of uneasiness. His plans for his own salvation were so closely linked with Moran's interests, for the present, that the man might prove dangerous, if his love for Helen were too strongly opposed. That the girl could scarcely tolerate his force of character, her father knew from out of the past. But it was characteristic of him that even in the moment of his peril, he did not seek to influence her in Moran's favor.

"He'd been out there for some time as my agent."

"Yes, I knew that. He——he has written to me, although I haven't answered his letters. I've been curious to hear from him again, because he said he was going to send me some kodak pictures of Moondance."

"Maybe he hasn't sent them because you didn't answer."

Helen's lips curled in disdain.

"He'd never stop for that. But maybe I will answer the next one. I'm curious to find out what's going on out there. It's all so mysterious. Do you know, father," she added playfully shook her finger at him—"this is the first time in a long, long while, that you haven't talked to me with perfect confidence, and I think that a very ominous sign. I'm sure you'll be punished for it."

The Senator winced at the word punished, and Helen laughed at what she felt to be the effect of her raillery.

"Oh, I'm sorry. You see, I'm so worried about Gordon. Honestly, father, I'm serious about that. I——I love him, and I don't want him hurt."

"Hurt?"

"Oh, in his prospects, of course. Is he going to get into trouble about it."

"Oh well, my dear, there's really nothing to tell. It's all about some homesteads that don't want to get title to, and hold of. Wade'll not be hurt, no; that is, if he beats me out. If I win out, he'll have——"

"He will?"

"We both can't win. It's to be a fight, you might say, struggle, I hope. There's no reason for it to be otherwise." The Senator appeared strangely nervous, despite the effort at self-control. "Wade as a man and a Westerner, doesn't expect to be fed on pap, you know. May the best man win, that's the way of it. Here comes your mother," he concluded, evidently relieved to be spared further explanation of the matter.

Helen thought that his manner had been strange.

"Well, I'd better go out there, anyway," she said, half in fun.

"You should have run in, Helen," her mother said severely, "and greeted her husband and had heard the explanation of his presence with them. The decorations are very fine, and——"

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"Why wasn't it given to me when it came, Person?" She took from the senator's hand the envelope and tore open the package. "I've been expecting these."

"I can't say, miss," I'll inquire."

One of the footmen was called, a dressmaker's announcement, but the other letter and package were in the hand-writing of Race Moran, and while mother and the pictures of Moondance had arrived, Helen hurried with them to her own white and gold suite.

"I'll not need you tonight, Annette. You may go," she said to her maid, seating herself at her desk.

The letter from Moran, she tossed aside unopened, but exclaimed with delight when the package proved to contain several dozen clear photographs of Moondance and neighborhood.

First of all, as though Moran thought it most important, was a snap-shot picture of himself, which had been taken, so he wrote on the back of the print, by an obliging cowpuncher. The girl's face was a study in amused scorn as she looked at the photograph, for which Moran had produced a real cigar in his mouth, his hands in his pockets, and an expression of expansive geniality upon his rather hard countenance. She knew that he had been of much service, in a business way, to her father, and that he would be considered his boyhood in the slums of New York, which still marked his face, but she had himself as a suitor for her hand, he became, of course, absurdly impossible.

There were a number of views of the town itself; of its main street, mired in mud; its hotel and dance-hall, which was certainly very attractive on the outside; and of "the boys" in various stages of photographic self-consciousness. There were also photographs of the marvelously beautiful countryside, but as she neared the end of them, Helen was disappointed to have found none of Wade. "Of course, he wouldn't send me one of him," she said petulantly to herself, and was on the point of running the remaining prints, to pause at the very last of them while a tide of color flooded her face and throat.

The little photograph showed a tall, handsome, vigorous looking man, in the act of mounting a mean, half-broken bay saddle, with one hand resting on his pony's flank. The man was Wade. With a laughing face, he pointed ahead, apparently for the benefit of a——girl——a very good-looking girl, whose figure was distinctly attractive in the foreground with almost stereoscopic clearness. Wade was smiling upon the girl, who seemed to be responding to him, although her face in the picture was partially turned away, so that Helen could not determine whether the smile of Moondance at noon, the camera had done its work well, and the figures of the two

His countenance was frank and cheerful, and he walked with the free, swinging stride of the outdoor liver, who finds his enjoyment of bodily health and vigor. Entering the cabin by the open door, he passed through to the rear where the rattle of pots and pans and the appetizing smell of frying bacon told that supper was nearly ready.

Bill Santry was standing by the stove, turning the bacon in its sizzling grease, with an awkwardness which betrayed his unfamiliarity with the task. The face which the lean and grizzled plainsman turned toward his employer and friend was seamed by tiny wrinkles in the leathery skin, the result of years of exposure to all kinds of weather.

"Hello, Gordon!" His pale-blue eyes showed like pin points beneath the shaggy, gray brows. "You're back early, just in time for me to observe that if we don't get a pot smaller'n this here outfit totes around quick, the boys'll be on a diet of raw hen fruit. Blamed if I'll touch a egg after this trip!"

"There's a Chinese coming out from Moondance tomorrow," Wade called from the adjoining room where he had gone to hang up his spurs.

Santry bent over the stove to look after the bacon before, from the large picture of Helen Rexhill, which she had given to Wade, and which he had considered the most ornamental feature of the ranch-house, had fallen face forward. Santry was curious to see how long it would be before Wade would set the photograph straight, and chuckled to himself when no move was made to do so. Wade presented Santry to Helen, when the two men were on a trip to Chicago, and the old plainsman had not liked her, although, in common with the entire male population of Moondance and vicinity, he had succumbed to the charms of Dorothy Purnell. The delight of his own deductions made him chortle to himself.

"There's thunder to pay over in the valley, Bill." Wade deftly rolled himself a cigarette, as he watched Santry "fish the bacon." Sheep—thousands of them—are running in."

"What!" Santry straightened up with an expression of incredulous amazement. "Sheep? On our range? You ain't kiddin' me?"

"Wish I was, but it's a fact. The sheep are feeding on the grass we had hoped to save against the winter. It's the Jensen band. I could see him from where I stood."

"Hell!" Stamping angrily across the floor, Santry gazed out into the gathering dusk. "Sheep, dirty, low-lived Swede! But we'll fix him, boy. I know his breed, the skunkers! I'll——" The veins in the old plainsman's throat grew engorged and the pupils of his eyes became further contracted. "I'll run his blamed outfit out of the valley before the summer'er. I'll take Jensen an'——"

"Steady!" Wade interposed. "Violence will do later, maybe. Just now we must try to avoid a fight."

"But, for the love of Mike——"

Santry stretched out his powerful hands and twined his fingers aimlessly in and out, as he watched the sweating Swede like to have them at the throat of the Swedish herder.

"It grieves," Wade went on, fleckling his cigarette through the window," Jensen would never dare to come in here on his own initiative. I think that we cattle men hold a lease on the biggest part of the valley, and he's got no right in him. The scanty bit of good grass for his sheep outside our range, and he knows that, too. He's trying to take a chance, bank on losing his stock, and maybe some of his herders, by butting in here."

"That's what I want to know," Santry immediately agreed, as though the thought had never occurred to him before. "What's the game? Answer me that! By the great horned toad, if I had my way——"

"The country isn't what it was ten years ago, Bill. We've courts here now, in place of Judge Colt. We must go slow." A warning hand. "Sooner or later, Jensen will be heavily in debt. You can stay here and keep Kelly and the rest quiet if they get wind of what's going on. Don't start anything, though." He arose and kicked himself out of his chaps, the leather leggings which cowmen use, as a protection against trouble ever since we refused to give that fellow, Moran, a right of way through the valley. He is in this, we've got a clever man to fight."

"That's another one I'd like to get my hands on," muttered Santry belligerently. "D——d oily, greedy land shark! All right, all right! Needn't say nothing. I'll use the brains of this here outfit, and until you say the word, I'll behave. But when the time comes, I'm going to do the fightin' man, let me at him! When you want to run some of these here crooks outer the country, you can depend on the old Bill Santry. Until then, I'll wait. That is——" He waved a warning finger at Wade." That is, unless, before then, we don't want war, that is to say, to want it, you understand me! But, by the great horned toad, I ain't goin' to let no lousy, empty-headed, stinkin', sheep-herdin' Swede wipe his feet on me. No, sirree, not by no means!"

With a further admonitory shake of his grizzled head, the old man returned to the task of cooking supper.

"You're sure the Chink'll be over in the mornin'?" he asked anxiously, and Wade abstractedly nodded. "Cookin' ain't no job for a white man. Breakin' rock in hell would be plumb cool alongside of this job." He wiped the sweat from his forehead with the back of his hand. "Say, do you remember the biscuits you made over to Painted Rock? The ones I et ain't digested yet.

"Every time I cook a meal," he went on, chuckling, "I think about the time Flour Sack Jim hired out to wrastle grub for that Englishman. Flour Sack was one of the real old-timers, rough and ready, with a heart as big as a bar'l, but he wouldn't bend his knee to no man livin'. The English fellow was all kinds of a swell, with money enough to choke a steer. For family reasons, he'd bought a ranch and started to raise horses. He was one of these here two-peaked hats, with a bow on top, and an eyeglass screwed into one eye.

"The first night after Flour Sack arrived, he got up a mess of jack-rabbit stew, and stuck his head out the door, yelled in approved round-up style, 'Come an' git it.' Then he piled up his own plate and started in for eat. In about ten minutes, in comes the English dude, and when he seen the cook eatin' away, he says haughty-like, 'Bless me soul, I cawn't eat with me servants, doncher know?' Flour Sack says, right off the bat, 'Shut lookin' up or nothin'. Take a cheer,' he says, 'an' wait until I git through.'

"Although Wade had heard the story many times, he laughed heartily with Santry, as the latter began to dish up the food, after which he summoned the hired men.

"Mind, now, Bill," warningly said Wade. "Not a word about the sheep."

The next morning, after a restless night, the young rancher set out alone for the sheep camp. He was more than ever concerned over the outlook, because darkness had brought to his pillow visions of cattle, driven on a demanded range, and of Santry and Race Moran engaged in a death struggle. Particularly because of the danger of this, he had insisted upon Santry staying at home. The old cattle man, scarred veteran of many a frontier brawl, was too quick-tempered and too proficient with his six-shooter to let back-talk from Jensen and sheep-herders. Wade was becoming convinced that Moran was responsible for the invasion of the range, although still at a loss for his reasons. The affair was marked with Moran's handiwork and the silent swiftness of his methods.

For some months Moran had been trying to ingratiate himself in the neighborhood, but, although he seemed to have plenty of money, the ranch and stock men did not take kindly to his advances. Wade was still a agent of Eastern capitalists, and had opened an office which for sumptuous appointments had never been equaled in that part of the country; but he had not been able to buy land at the prices he offered and his business apparently had not prospered. Then, in the vicinity of other ranges, had appeared the sheep, to overflow into Moon Valley. Moran denied, at first, that they had come at his instance, but later on, he tacitly admitted to the protesting cattle men that he had a certain amount of interest in sheep herding.

More far-sighted than some of his neighbors, Wade had leased a large strip of land in the valley for use as a winter range. Moran seemed to want this land badly, and had offered a really fair price for it, but Wade had not cared to sell. Relying upon his privileges as leasee, Wade had not feared the approach of the sheep, and he had no reason to dispose of his holding to Moran. Now, it looked as though the purpose was to "sheep" him out of his own territory, so that the agent might buy up the lease and homestead rights on practically his own terms. The thing had been done before in various parts of the cattle country.

Cattle and sheep cannot live on the same range, and when a sheep band succession of a country, cattle must move out of it, or starve. No wonder, then, that the cattle men of Moon Valley were aroused. Their livelihood was slipping away from them, day by day, for unless prompt steps were taken, the grass would be ruined by the woolly plague.

"Coyotes!" he muttered.

Thus far, Gordon Wade, a leader in the cattle faction, had been firm for peaceful measures. "Avoid bloodshed at almost any cost," had been his motto, and he had done his best to restrain the more hot-headed members of his party, who were for shooting the sheep and driving out the herders at the rifle point. But there was a limit, even to Wade's patience; and his jaws squared grimly as he considered the probable result, should Moran and his followers, the sheep owners, persist in their present course of action.

It was still very early in the morning when Wade arrived at the camp. Oscar Jensen, a short, thick-set man, with an unwholesome, heavy face, stepped out of his little tent.

"Mornin'!"

"Good morning!" The cattle man affected a cheerfulness which he did not feel. "Are these your sheep, Mr. Jensen?" He waved in the direction of the grazing land, a dirty white patch upon the green of the valley.

"Yah."

"Perhaps you don't know that you are on Double Arrow land? I've ridden over to ask you to keep off your sheep. They're spoiling our grass."

Jensen grinned sardonically, for he had been successful in the visit of Wade and was prepared for it.

"I got right here. There's plenty good grass around. I take my sheep where they feed. This is Government range."

"It is Government land," Wade quietly acknowledged, "but you have no right on it. I control this range, for the present, and unless you move in twelve hours, you'll be arrested for trespass."

The herder's evil face darkened with anger.

"Who'll do it? The sheriff won't, and I'm not afeered of you cattle men. My sheep can eat as well as your cattle, and I got good right here. I won't move."

"When you get into trouble, remember that I warned you, Jensen. There's plenty of free water for your sheep on the other side of the hills. I advise you to trail your sheep before it is too late. Don't think that Moran can save you from molestation. Moran isn't running Moon Valley, and don't forget that."

"How do you know that Moran's backin' me?" The Swede could not conceal his surprise. "You can't bluff me, Wade. I know my rights, and I'm going to have them."

"The devil you say!" Now that he was sure of Moran's complicity in the matter, Wade felt himself becoming angry, in spite of his resolve to keep cool. "You'd best listen to reason and pull out while your sheep are able to travel. There are men in this valley who won't waste much time in talk."

"Bah!" Jensen snorted contemptuously. "I can take care of myself. I know what I'm doing."

"You've been warned," was Wade's parting remark, as he urged his horse forward.

"Go to hell!" the Swede shouted after him.

Heading toward Moondance, the ranch-owner rapidly rode over the sun-baked ground, too full of rage to take pleasure even in the prospect of an hour with Dorothy Purnell. The worst of Jensen's impudence lay in Wade's realization that to enlist the aid of the sheriff against the sheep-herder would be very difficult, if not altogether impossible. There was very little law in Moon Valley, and what little there was seemed, somehow, to have been taken under the direction of Race Moran.

It was now broad day, and the prairies warmed to the blazing sun. Long, rolling stretches of grass, topped with rocks and alkaline sand, gave back a blinding glare like the reflection of a summer sea, over which rose a haze of gray dust like ocean mists over distant reaches. Far to the south, Double Butte lifted its rugged front in forbidding majesty.

Beyond the summit of the butte was a green-and-brown plateau of sage-brush and bunch-grass. Behind this mesa, a range of snow-capped mountains cut the horizon with their white peaks, while in their deep and gloomy canyons lurked great shade of cool, rich grass. As far as the eye could see, there was no sign of life save Wade and his mount.

The good horse tickled up a cloud of yellow dust that hung in the air like smoke from a battery of cannon. It enveloped the ranchman, who rode with the loose seat and erect back of his kind; it came to lay deeply on his shoulders and on his wide-brimmed Stetson hat; even on the leather chaps that girded his legs. He looked steadily ahead, under reduced eyelids, over the trackless plain that encompassed him. At a pace that would speedily cover the twenty miles to Moondance, he was on his way to see Race Moran.

The continuation of this highly interesting story will be found in the Ledger issue of next week. Read it. If you are not a regular subscriber to the Ledger we would like to have your name on our list. The ledger is only $1.00 per year.

* * *

A Joke on Him.

The dentist was torturing his victim in the usual double fashion. The story he was telling at the moment was on himself:

"When I was young in the profession," said he, "I was operating in a country place for a few weeks to help a friend. One day a farmer came in—a big, muscular chap. His mouth was full of short whose teeth come like the roots of oak trees.

"As he sat in the chair he asked, 'Will it hurt?'

"Feeling in rather a jocular mood, I answered: 'Well, if it doesn't it shan't cost you anything.' Then I fell to work.

"The tooth came even harder than I expected, so at last I was got up from the chair and pulled himself together—he had not uttered a sound—I said, 'Well, did it hurt?'

"Not a bit,' answered the countryman, and strode out of the office, leaving me a fee completely nonplused, and the laughing stock of my friend and the two or three patrons who sat about the office.

"I have never tried to be funny professionally since," he said, meditatively.

* * *

Quite Unnecessary.

Ollie James, the famous Kentucky Congressman, orator, lawyer, and once a little town in the western part of the State, but his patriotism is statewide, was recently made the victim of the last Democratic national convention ahe had no more enthusiastic supporter than James. A Denver supporter was protesting.

"Why, you know, Colonel," said he, "Lawrence Maxwell will take care of the crowds. Even by putting cots in the halls, parlors and the dining-rooms of the hotels there wouldn't be beds enough."

"Beds!" echoed the genial Congressman, "beds! Why, he would make her visitors have such a thundering good time that no gentleman would think of going to bed!"

* * *

To Their Shame.

A Western newspaper man tells of a friend who edited, with more or less success, a paper in an Iowa town. That he was somewhat discouraged by the lack of interest shown in his journal was evidenced by this notice which, one afternoon, appeared on the editorial page:

"Burglars entered our house last night. To the everlasting shame of the community for whose welfare we have labored, be it said, they got nothing."

The Change in Erica

Or, A Love Story of Finland

By De Lysle Ferree Cass

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CHAPTER IV.

THE reign of Aground Uleaborg fiord was visited for almost a month by a spell of astonishingly fine weather for that season of the year. The sun shone with a warmth that at noonday smounted to heat. Late blooming flowers again showed their heads above the tough half-withered grass, and the evergreen furze, splotching the gray rocks with vivid color, gave the landscape almost the appearance of a second spring. Generally at this time of year, even the sea, which made the fishing good and kept the men folks very busy. The women had already begun the gathering the fruit from the orchards and were thankful that the Lord had made it so abundant for them, that the Sir Andrew yacht remained in the neighborhood, and its master, pacing the deck restlessly at morning and noon, or else flashing fleet slip by him in the mist like impalpable shadows. Time hung heavy on Sir Andrew's hands.

The longing to talk with Erica again finally became so strong that he could no longer resist it. Perhaps the exercises of what her parents might think of his actions. He scanned the barren hills along the shore with his marine glasses in hopes of seeing her taking a walk. Yet he had nothing in particular to say to her, no reference upon her. He only felt the irresistible inclination to become better acquainted with her. At times the mental pictures of how her blue eyes would open wide to see him standing again before her. At other times the loneliness would overcloud his reflections and he would tell himself that the girl was avoiding him purposely. Perhaps it was that sullen-faced young fisherman, who had taken his overtures so boorishly, who had warned her to have nothing to do with strangers. Bitterness cankered Sir Andrew's soul at such moments, and he would curse for the childish folly in lingering there as he did. But, fool though he called himself, there he stayed, hoping against hope that Erica might one day stray across his path.

It became his custom to take long solitary jaunts along the cliffs and fens, walking sometimes in deep thought, at others keenly alert for some sign of her he sought. He came to be as familiar with the countryside as the natives themselves, and they, seeing him pass by in this manner every day, came to feel acquainted with him and would say:

"God bless your lordship. It is a fine day."

To which he would answer abstractedly: "Yes, I thank you, sir."

Old Nils' cottage drew him to it like a magnet, though he had promised to put in an appearance there again—welcome though he was. At last he could resist his longing no longer. He presented himself at the doorway and knocked, at first gently and then, as there was no response, more and more firmness. Only the echo answered him, so he pulled the latchstring and stepped into the house, feeling very guilty about it all.

There was no one about. The last night's ashes lay in the fireplace, while the floor was swept clean, and a shining row of pans hung clear across one rough unplaned wall. The sun-blackened beams of the roof hung ancient cooking utensils, bundles of dried herbs, woodcock and duck and snipe and also an old fishnet, the meshes of which were broken. Erica's colored silk holiday neckerchief was carefully folded across the back of a chair.

Sir Andrew passed his hand lingeringly over the gaudy scarf, then nervously swiftly. He lapsed into meditation, day dreaming of how it had adorned the girl's strong white neck that night when she came in out of the storm. Evidently she prized this bit of silk. The Englishman felt that was getting far more than its due.

Suddenly a trill of full-throated girlish laughter startled him from his reverie, a recognition of the voice for Erica's. The sound had come from outside, around the corner of the cottage. With the blood drumming in his temples, Sir Andrew tiptoed to the door and thence whither the sounds led him.

He came upon Erica, lathered up to the elbows with soap as she washed clothes in a big wooden tub set on top of a box in the yard at the rear of the house. Her hair was disheveled and her face flushed from the exertion of scrubbing. Sivers now and then another of those bell-like peals of laughter would escape her as she watched the antics of a kitten that played among the heaps of dead leaves. It was their rustling under Sir Andrew's tread which betrayed his presence.

Erica's merriment ended abruptly, and a total change of expression came over her at the sound. Blank astonishment filled her eyes as she saw who her visitor was. She was embarrassed that he should find her so untidy also.

"Why, it is Pan Andreas," she said, wiping her hands hastily upon her apron. "I am glad to see you again, sir."

Peace settled upon the Englishman's soul at the genuine kindliness that shone in the girl's glance. The unaffected simplicity of her remark charmed him, and the assumption of any guettishness could have done. He felt that he had known her for years, and she was a very dear daughter to him.

"Will you not try to call me Sir Andrew?" he asked, seating himself upon a tree-stump near the tub. "Can you pronounce that, Miss Erica?"

"Sir Andrew," said she, shyly, and then both burst into spontaneous laughter. All restraint was gone. Erica, with effrontery at her own assumption of such another's presence, Erica never thought of asking why he had come.

They chatted together for a couple of hours, the girl, however, continuing with her work the while. Sir Andrew, at last, arose to go she accompanied him down the path to the fiord landing and waved her hand almost to the water until the yawl had almost reached the side of the yacht. Then she went back and finished her work, to the tune of bursting into ripples of song as she worked and feeling extraordinarily light-hearted. That was the day Sir Andrew returned from a trip to the village, she said.

"Pan Andreas was here again this afternoon. We talked together nearly two hours."

"What did he come for?" queried old Nils, looking at her keenly.

Erica blushed. "Why—why, he did not say, and I forgot to ask him," she stammered.

"That is too bad," said old Nils. "Maybe he has a mind to buy furs and I have three fine silver fox pelts here."

"I will ask him the next time," said Erica.

It was an intuition truly feminine that told her there would surely be a "next time."

CHAPTER V.

AFTER this it often happened that Erica and Sir Andrew met. They became acquainted and visited with each other. It did not occur to the girl that she really knew little of her new friend. It required no pretty bad nature wholly to appreciate the evil in one's fellow men, and Erica was far too honest, too unsuspicious, to suspect ulterior motives in any one. The one consideration with her was that she liked him. Her father, who had taken him to Yan, her betrothed, never entered her head. She did not care for the Englishman's money. Not that she was too old to have inspired love in her—not that he could not have made her happy and contented with the simple comforts and luxuries such as she would never enjoy as the spouse of a Finnish fisherman—but she had never looked to her in that light. Plato himself could have imagined a no more perfect, a no more innocent friendship than that between this strangely consorted pair.

They took strolls together along the cliffs overlooking the sea, and Erica gathered hand in hand like two children over the fen country. On two Saturdays Sir Andrew remained over Sunday in port and saw her safely home again after the marketing was done. As their comradeship ripened he gradually came to be a frequent visitor at the home and would partake of old Nils' hospitality of the simplest. Erica, however, was dutifully furnished with many little delicacies that completely won him old Hilda's heart too.

On the occasion of his third call at the cottage, old Nils slyly broached the subject of his fox skins.

"Master Jarn lordship would be interested in some fine pelts that I have here," he said. "I would be willing to part with them for a mere nothing."

Sir Andrew assented hastily. Of course he would be delighted to inspect them. He had been for a long time desirous of purchasing some of those very same kind of skins. He bought all that old Nils had to sell and insisted that he wanted more of the same sort.

"I vow that I will not leave Finland until you can get me some more of them," he said.

Old Nils, whose profits had exceeded even his wildest expectations, promised impliedly that more should be forthcoming, and set his traps on the edge of the pine forest nightly. In the meantime, Sir Andrew's idyl with Erica continued and their mutual regard increased.

These goings-on had not passed unremarked by the people of the neighborhood. Old wives' gossip began to circulate concerning the significance of their relations, and Henryk, the village notary's son, who hated Yan for the rebuff also had given his impertinence, made the most of the news.

"What a sly minx!" he observed several times in the tavern. "We shall see her downfall yet—mark my words."

Dubious shakes of the head and portentous winks came to follow the mention of Erica's name wherever the scandal-mongers got together. Old Sven and his wife were puzzled by what they saw the girl passing by, her hand clasped loosely in that of the strange Englishman. They had given Yan no inkling to Yan about it, knowing well the violent and revengeful nature that underlay that young man's calm. Sven, especially, was worried, for he scented the obliteration of his most cherished schemes. He spoke to Erica about it, his ancient comrade about it. He was confident that old Nils would be perfectly honest with him.

One night after the close of the day's work he dropped into his friend's house, ostensibly for a social chat with old Nils. Before the fire and a couple of hours' reminiscing. He approached the subject of Erica's suspicious attachment casually.

"That is a fine pair of slippers you wear, old friend," he said to Nils.

"Yes," answered Erica's father, "Pan Andreas Gresham, the English traveler, made me a present of them."

"That was very kind of him," remarked old Sven, exuding a huge cloud of smoke from his pipe. "He is very kind, indeed. Is it not rather peculiar that he should be so generous, though?"

"Oh, he's not," said Nils, laughing. "He feels very friendly towards us, and the petty Russian tax-gatherers put on more than us poor Finns do. That is the fine gentleman does. Moreover, he has taken quite a fancy to our Erica."

"Oh, yes," Sven went on, talking about that for a long time," said old Sven, staring fixedly at the glowing embers.

Old Nils bridled and he asked with some asperity: "And what may you mean by that, Sivers Sven?"

The other moved uncomfortably in his chair, but indignation got the better of discretion and he blurted out: "Why, just this, comrade. They, and I, too, fail to understand why the two of them should always be sitting off alone, with their heads so close together. My boy Yan would wonder, too, if he only knew as much of it as I do."

"Wait!" growled old Nils sternly. "Do they talk about our Erica that way then?"

"Yes," Sven continued, "and they agree that this Englishman can promise nursery hereafter to Ingrida's child. Why, him because he has given you presents. Bah! Do you not see the reason for it all? He is trying to ingratiate himself with you and Hilda here—just blinding your eyes so that he may have a free field with his designs on Erica. I say to see through so flimsy a trick as that. He is making her foolish with pretty words and fine gifts, and that an honest girl should not listen to. He is trying to upset what we two planned here in this very room, and which we have never yet in swaddling clothes. He is stealing Erica away from my boy Yan."

The old man's face had gradually risen with his excitement and now rang shrill and vibrant through the silent room. It quivered with anger and reproach. "And you, Nils, who promised her to my Yan, tolerate, countenance this!" he went on. "Comrade, I have called my friend for sixty-odd years."

Old Nils' weather-beaten, wrinkled face flushed under the stinging words. He silenced his account with a look of such grimness that old Sven involuntarily dropped his eyes.

"You have said enough—far more than enough, Sven," said he. "I had not thought that you could address me in this way. One might think you had not known me all your life long. I know nothing against Pan Andreas. I have seen no just reason for suspecting his motives, nor am I one to be influenced by the tattle of the village idlers. Yet it may be all as you say, and, therefore, will I see that he and our Erica are kept apart in the future. Is not the marriage of our children as cherished a plan of mine as it is of yours? I have looked fondly towards it all of these years, and Yan shall have her, as I promised you. We will even hasten the ceremony and stop these gossips' mouths."

"Give me your hand on that, old friend!" exclaimed Sven, tears trickling down the leathery furrows in his face into his gray beard. "I did not really doubt you, but my heart was sick for Yan, fearing that her heart might be stolen away while he was working hard out there on the ocean to make a home for her. He loves her dearly. He will make a good husband for Hilda's girl."

"He shall have her," repeated old Nils firmly, "and she shall see no more of the Englishman. Rest easy on that score."

And that night he imposed the decree upon Erica.

"Have no more to do with Pan Andreas," he said, "if you would stay under this roof!"

The girl went tearfully to bed.

CHAPTER VI.

THE probability is that Yan, constantly at sea as he was, would never have heard the hideously distorted versions of Erica's relationship with Sir Andrew had it not been for Henryk, the notary's son. That venomous individual took care that he should hear the whole garbled account of it, with certain highly imaginative embellishments of his own originating. The young fisherman scowled blackly, but jealousy forced him to listen against his will. The recital stirred the phlegmatic nature to the depths. Rage distorted his whole face, a vision so that he almost believed what he heard. Had Sir Andrew crossed his path just then, he would undoubtedly have assaulted him. He carried his tale of woe to his father.

"Pah!" said old Sven, "Do not be uneasy, my boy. I myself have fixed everything up for you. Erica is an honest, good girl, and a sensible one. A few words of sharp warning will soon set her head. She will make you a good wife yet. Old Nils has set your wedding day for Sunday—a month hence. But tickle you—hey? Go over to the cottage there oftener than you have been during late. Erica will be pleased in showing the girl that you like her. Let her know that you can care more for her than this Englishman. Englishman does, even though you may not express yourself as prettily."

Yan promised that he would do this. He determined to watch Erica more closely. He was ashamed to doubt her after hearing his father's words, but—

Sir Andrew, in the meantime, was enjoying content of mind for the first time in many years. He would have liked to remain in Finland for all time; whenever he thought of leaving, such a depression came over him that he speedily renounced the thought. He wished that Erica, who so reminded him of Ingrida, could be his own sorrowful past, might remain always with him. Had it not been that he considered his consecration to memory's shrine, he would gladly have proposed marriage to her in order that they might always be together. In his purity, artless way, her absolute confidence in his honor, touched him to the quick. He reverently calmed the ghosts of those stone coffins in the great vault of the Greshams afar off in that ancient little Kent village, knowing that was nothing he would have been unwilling to do for her.

Sir Andrew had told her of the wife and daughter that had filled his past. He had found the girl full of ready sympathies and tenderness for his loss. In turn she had confided to him her love for Yan and of how he never seemed to get home. Sir Andrew told her the girls on whom their hearts were set.

"He cannot understand the need of it," she said, simply, sadly.

"Why not explain to him?" suggested Sir Andrew, smiling in spite of himself at the young man's lovers' quarrel as you say he been, surely he would bless you for making the way easier for him. Why not shout it, Erica?"

"No, no! I could not do that!" cried the girl, hastily. "He might consider me—that—that—oh, I know not what! He—well, he ought to know enough to do it without my saying anything about it."

"Perhaps he is bashful and afraid of a rebuff from you," said Sir Andrew.

The girl shook her head stubbornly. "I shall never consent to ask him to do it," she asserted. And there the matter dropped from the conversation.

It was the morning after old Sven's interview with Nils that Sir Andrew presented himself as usual before the cottage in anticipation of another long stroll with Erica across the fens. The girl herself answered his raps upon the door and Sir Andrew was surprised to observe that her eyes were red and swollen with recent weeping.

"Why, my child, what is the meaning of this?" he exclaimed. "What has happened to grieve you?"

Erica's blue eyes were yet laden with the mist of tears unshed and she bit her red underlip to hide how it trembled. Her glance was mourning itself and she blocked the doorway so that he could not enter the house, as had been his custom of late.

"You must go away from here," she said with a quaver in her usually cheery

voice. "You must go away and never come back again."

"What?" ejaculated Sir Andrew, his jaw dropping and experiencing sudden contraction of his heartstrings, "What is this that you say to me, Erica? I must go away and never come back? Why?"

The girl's eyes dropped suddenly, and she became embarrassed.

"That I cannot tell you," she said faintly.

Sir Andrew grasped both her hands and drew her near him. "I can and will tell me, my child," said he gravely, "What is this trouble?"

Erica cried to meet his glance bravely, but failed. She almost broke down, and the gentle compassion in the man's eyes only tended to unnerve her the more.

"They have been saying things about us in the village," she murmured. "They have whispered about him. I am too longer a good girl and that you—that you are my lover." The girl's voice trailed off into a sigh.

"What foolishness is this!" cried Sir Andrew, his fine face flushing with indignation. "It is absurd!"

"Yes, but my father believes them," she went on, her cheeks growing whiter and whiter as she continued. "Tan's parents have asked him to put a stop to our meetings, and he has said that I must see you no more. Even Yan no longer trusts me."

Sir Andrew was plunged into gloomy thought. He realized that now he would have to lose this dear, cheering comrade and resume the burden of the past once more. He must part from the girl for her sake—for the sake of her reputation. Desolation overwhelmed him, but he tried to console the girl.

"It is shameful!" he said slowly, "but you are right. I must go away and not see you more. Even Yan no longer trusts me."

Erica and Sir Andrew did not meet again for more than a week. In that time the preparations for her marriage with Yan went forward as fast as they could be pushed by their respective families, and the young man would come to sit beside her by the fire of the fire each night, watching her nimble fingers fly as she sewed on her bridal dress.

"That will be very pretty," he said one evening.

"Yes," Erica answered listlessly, and wondered why it was that he did not say: "But you are much prettier, my sweetheart."

Yan just sat there motionless, blinking his eyes now and then. He was pondering jealously where her straying thoughts might be. Burning with dull anger he told himself: "She is wishing she were with that Englishman! May God curse his soul!"

CHAPTER VII.

IT WAS the night before the wedding, and Yan had not left the whole evening through stolidly studying the tormented expression of his bride-to-be's face as the fire threw flickering light into bold relief. Whenever his eyes met hers he noted that she crimsoned to the hair and drooped her head quickly.

To Yan the sign meant: "She is guilty; she is ashamed."

To Erica it really signified:

"Oh! He stared at me so intently. Perhaps now, at last, on the eve of our wedding, he is going to open his big heart to me—to tell me how love has hitherto made him bashful—to take me hard, close in his strong arms and to kiss my face, even—many, many times until I feel suffocating for lack of breath. Now he is going to do all that now—"

But Yan did not, and Erica's heart went sinking within her. She could not help saying to herself: "Pan Andreas would understand me better than this."

At ten o'clock, which is accounted a late hour in those regions, Yan yawned prodigiously, stretched himself and made his adieus. Erica's eyes were burning feverishly in a cold face when she lit him to the door with a candle.

"It is a bad night out," she said impersonally. "The sky promises a big storm from the east."

As she spoke, she unlatched and opened the door, showing the black night outside, with long, serpent-like clouds scudding across a starless sky. A sudden fer gust of wind swept past them into the house, extinguishing the candle in her hand and plunging them into complete darkness. Before she knew what had happened she felt arms like two huge, steel bands surround and compress her—felt a bristly beard pressed tight against her lips and the very heart in her body being strained up through her throat. She choked as if strangling, and pressed feebly against the massive chest of her captor in futile effort to loosen his vise-like hold upon her. It seemed hours before his mouth left hers and she could flee gasping into the house, slamming the door behind her. Yan had kissed her, at least, but how? HOW? She beat her burning forehead with her hands, feeling that she had been shamed and humiliated.

"Dear God!" she moaned. "He has no true love for me! That was not a pure kiss. He has treated me without respect."

Outside the winds howled and shrieked like a half-mad forerunner announcing the speedy coming of its master, the storm. Low growls of distant thunder could be heard above the rattling of the window-casements. Erica scarcely heeded

"Why, it is Pan Andreas!"

them. She had no heart to talk with either her father or mother, who sat dozing in the warmth of the open fire. Her brain was chaos, out of which but one miserable thought resolved itself:

"And it is for this that I have loved him so!"

Voices sounded just outside her door, and a mighty pounding upon it reverberated through the still room. Erica started to her feet, wide-eyed, with one hand pressed to her heart. Old Nils and Hilda were startled from their sleep.

"What is it? Who's there?" shouted the old man.

"Open! open quickly!" came a breathless voice from outside. "It is a matter of life and death!"

Old Nils unbarred the door and admitted a stranger whose face was whipped red with the wind. From his clothes he was a sailor.

"What do you want?" asked the old man in astonishment.

"I am from Sir Andrew Gresham's yacht down there on the fiord. His lordship is very sick, and there is no physician to be had in the whole neighborhood. He was failing rapidly when I left him. He asks that you permit him to see your daughter. Miss Erica, for a last time on earth. I have the yawl moored to the landing at the foot of the cliffs to row her to him."

Exclamations of pity and surprise broke from all their lips simultaneously. Erica felt suddenly strong again.

"I will go with you," she said, catching up her heavy shawl from a peg on the wall.

"Wait!" cried old Nils. "How will you do that? This is your wedding eve! What will people think of you going out to the gentleman at this hour of the night? What would Yan say? You cannot go!"

The sailor interposed hurriedly: "Everything will be as it should," he said. "His lordship is at death's door and says he must see her for a last time. He told me expressly that you are to accompany the girl for the sake of appearances. People cannot talk then, can they?"

Old Nils considered the matter with evident diarelish. He looked uneasily at Erica, waiting for his permission to go.

"It is a wild night outside," he objected. "There will be a terrible storm."

"Hurry along with me, and we shall be aboard the yacht before it breaks," said the sailor. "Have you no pity in you? Would you deny a slight favor to a man on his deathbed?"

"No," said old Nils reluctantly. "Pan Andreas was generous with us. He was always courteous, though we are only poor folk. Since the case is as it is, I suppose that we must go. Lead on, sir, and Erica and I will follow you. But we will not stay long aboard. He can speak to her and then we must come back again. Thank Heaven, it is dark and no one can see us going!"

The wind outside was so strong that they had no little difficulty in making the precarious descent of the cliff-path to the fiord. Here the night seemed even blacker and more ominous of the impending storm. The rowboat lashed to the landing tossed wildly about on a confusion of inky, froth-topped waves like a mere cork, and appeared far too frail to weather the expanse that lay between it and the yacht, riding somewhere out there beyond in the impenetrable darkness.

The sailor, watching his opportunity, leaped nimbly into the boat and took up the oars. It was with extreme difficulty that he was enabled to bring the light craft alongside the landing stone, out having the tossing confusion of breakers dash it into splinters against the wooden posts. He held the boat as steady as he could with one hand, managing an oar with the other.

"Make your chance in the jump in," he shouted to Erica. "And you, old man, unlash the painter from its fastenings there and be ready to follow the girl aboard her."

Erica nearly capsized the boat as she sprang aboard, and would have fallen into the water had her feet not been spread far apart. At the same moment old Nils unknotted the lashings and made ready to follow her. As he leaped, the storm burst in all its fury. Deafening crashes of thunder filled the dome of heaven and ghastly lightning zigzagged across the sky. A huge wave caught the boat broadside and hurled it high upon its crest like a mere feather. It was at that instant that old Nils leaped. His feet encountered no bottom—the black, icy water engulfed him and the waves piled up twenty feet above his head. Only a Finn could have survived such a plunge and ever risen to the surface again as this graybeard did. His horny hands clutched frantically at the slimy posts of the boat-landing. He felt them slipping, slipping, and saw a second monstrous wave towering above him, ready to topple over to bury him fathoms deep. He screamed at the top of his lungs—a weird, unearthly cry that sounded even above the howling wind. Then strong hands knotted themselves in his long hair and dragged him up from a watery grave.

The old man lay flat on the wooden landing, gasping and chocking for breath a long while, the cold spray freezing particles of brine upon his stiffening clothes. He felt some one shaking him roughly by the shoulders and urging him to get up and run for shelter before he froze. Old Nils gaped at his rescuer vaguely.

"I am Henryk, the village notary's son," he either said. "How did you fall into the water?"

The question brought a sudden poignant anguish to the old man's mind. He struggled to his feet and stared wildly seaward into the hell of bleak waters.

"Erica, my little girl!" he wailed.

Suddenly a powerful searchlight shot like a fiery sword over the tossing waste. It wavered now this way, now that.

"It is a signal from the yacht," cried old Nils. "It is to guide them to it, if the boat has not already been swamped!"

A black object appeared rising on the tops of the terrible waves. The searchlight followed its tossing hither and hither, yet always drawing a little nearer. Finally it was quite close to the larger vessel and a rope ladder was lowered to it. Heads and shoulders of sailors showed like specks above the yacht taffrail. Two figures mounted the swaying ladder and were hauled out of sight upon the deck. Then the searchlight vanished and darkness obliterated everything again.

Old Nils fell to his knees, with face upturned and arms outstretched as if crucified. "Thank God! Thank God they are saved!" he cried. "But oh! what will come of it now? What will Yan say when he hears that the boat has gone to him on board there alone?"

The old man turned to his rescuer, but Henryk was gone. He was ranging swiftly up the steep cliff path, an ugly joy filling his soul.

"Now I will make her regret that she ever played haughty with me," he was thinking. "She will learn what it is to slap Henryk Yakobsson's face!"

This story will be concluded in the next issue of the Ledger. During the coming months many great stories will spear in these columns. If you are not already a subscriber for this paper, it will pay you to send in a yearly subscription. It costs you only $1.00, and you will never regret it. Let us hear from you at once.

* * *

A Familiar Face.

She was of a somewhat haughty nature, and, being on a shopping expedition with a friend, happened to catch a glimpse of an acquaintance she did not wish to recognize.

"Let us go this way past the silk counter. I just see some one I don't care to meet."

"Who is she?" asked her friend, who did not see any one near them.

"Oh, some horrid woman with a smirk on her face. Of course I have only a bowing acquaintance with her, and although her face is familiar I cannot remember her name."

They finished their shopping and the two women found themselves at the same point where one of them had seen her disagreeable acquaintance.

"There she is again. Why, I do believe she's been here all the time," she said, pointing to the person in question.

"That woman? Goodness sakes, that's yourself you see in the mirror there!"

* * *

Worse Than Thief.

At a recent dinner Gen. Nelson A. Miles told the following story:

In a Southern town a colored man was complaining to the mayor of the order of the wickedness of the neighborhood. He said:

"Sesuh, dis am de wickedest town in de whole neighborhood. Why, dat lowdown nigger you see over dere, he doan deserve to live. He ought to be taken out and shot down."

"Why, how's that?" said the pale visitor.

"Well, he's a good-for-nothing; he's wuss 'en a thief."

"Worse than a thief? What did he steal?"

"My chickens."

"What? He stole one of your chickens?"

"No, sah, he didn't steal one of my chickens. He done went an' left de door of de coop open and de whole bunch run home."—Puck.

* * *

A wise physician sometimes flatters a man by telling him he has brain fag.

Aaron Lapwing's Genius

Or, For the Princess Herodias

By Leonard Britten

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CHAPTER VIII.

SUTCLIFFE'S DISCOVERY.

THE little rock-built town of Durazzo lay before Roddy's eyes. A score of flags fluttered from its white buildings. In the harbor, at anchor, lay an Austrian and an Italian cruiser. Roddy went up to Lord Sutcliffe, who, with his hands in his pockets, was standing at the bow, looking out indolently.

"Is this where I get off, Lord Sutcliffe?" he asked.

Lord Sutcliffe wheeled and regarded him insolently.

"Oh, certainly, if you wish, my dear fellow," he answered. "I'm awfully sorry you have been mixed up in this mess. But you shall take the first boat for Trieste, and there you can get a ship for America. Glad to have had you with us."

"Can't I send a cable from here to New York from Durazzo?" Roddy inquired.

"I hardly think so," Sutcliffe answered. "You see, Durazzo is at present surrounded by the rebel Mallasori, as is indicated by those flags above the buildings, raised by the respective nationalities for protection.

"But I have no doubt that we can fix you up somehow," he continued. "Perhaps the Austrian cruiser will take you to Trieste. It's been a pleasant voyage, hasn't it?"

Roddy could not help feeling nettled by Lord Sutcliffe's manner.

"Now, see here, Sutcliffe," he began, "I think I am entitled to some sort of explanation from you. Ever since I came on this confounded mystery voyage, things have been happening that could only happen in a floating lunatic asylum. First I'm kidnaped in mistake for you. Then you find the Corsair hidden away in the middle of the Atlantic, and she loses her gun and surrenders without a blow. Then you make prisoners of us all except Aaron Lapwing, the scoundrel, who ought to be shut up for the rest of his days. For two weeks I've had the freedom of the ship, and I haven't seen a soul to speak to, outside the seamen, who don't speak English, with the exception of yourself, who appear to be an honorary member of the Ancient Society of Venerable Clam-Mongers, and Lady Alice——"

"Well?" demanded Sutcliffe curtly.

"Than I'm supposed to be Prince Herod's prospective son-in-law——"

Lord Sutcliffe wheeled round on him.

"You may take it from me that you are not," he said quickly, with some heat.

"Well, then, will you please tell me what I am?" asked Roddy. "As I see it, I'm a kidnaped newspaper man, trying to get material for a story out of a set of mutes."

"You have described your situation very well," Sutcliffe answered. "As for the rest, it is a very simple matter, and should have commended itself to you long ago. Prince Hassan has made a prisoner of Prince Herod, his hereditary enemy, and he and his daughter are confined to their stateroom under guard. That is why you have not seen them. On our arrival at Durazzo they will be handed over to his highness, Prince Wittnar, an Italian cruiser. Roddy rules of Albania, to dispose of as he

It was an embarrassing situation.

pleases. You have told me that Mr. Lapwing attempted to kidnap me and kidnaped you by mistake. Well, I have nothing to do with that. Neither Mr. Lapwing nor you interests us in the least, Mr. Nicholson, and the sooner we are able to return you to your native land, the better we shall be pleased."

With which he turned on his heel and strolled away, leaving Roddy to chew the cud of his reflections.

This explanation had certainly cleared up a good deal of mystery. The capture of Prince Herod would, of course, immeasurably strengthen the hands of Prince Wittnar, the German ruler of Albania, and would compel Herod's followers, who were besieging the town, to sue for peace. And Roddy could see that neither Lapwing's subtle intrigues nor his own position occupied the thoughts of either Hassan or Sutcliffe a particle.

It was not probable, under these circumstances, that Roddy's engagement to Princess Herod would be considered as a binding one. At the same time Roddy was too much of a gentleman to run away from the situation without an interview, though he had entertained this project frequently in his desperation of mind. The thought of becoming the Princess' husband had grown unpalatable.

Then, again, Lady Alice had thrown in her lot with Prince Herod, and refused to leave him. And Roddy was conscious that the gray eyes of Lady Alice were going to exercise considerable influence over his life. He knew that Lady Alice did not love Lord Ronald Sutcliffe, and he strongly suspected that Lord Sutcliffe had ceased to be interested in her. He resolved to speak to Lady Alice again. He must get more than a promise of friendship from her before they were parted at Durazzo, into whose harbor the yacht was already steaming.

As if in answer to his unspoken longing, he saw her emerge upon the deck and come toward him. She had come in search of him! Roddy's heart leaped in his breast.

"Well, Mr. Nicholson, I suppose this means good-by and the end of our journey together," she said. "You will, no doubt, take the first available boat for America."

"I'm not sure yet," said Roddy. "Lord Sutcliffe has laid out that program for me, but that hasn't made it appear any the more attractive. What are you going to do?"

"I?" she answered. "I shall remain with his highness, Prince Herod, of course, and either return with him to his principality, or share his exile. This is good-by, then?"

Roddy looked fairly into Lady Alice's eyes, and he saw something there that belied the coldness of her manner. And he knew that he loved her with all his heart and soul, and had loved her from the day they first met.

"I am never going to leave you, Alice," he said unsteadily.

"I beg your pardon?" returned the girl, with lips that quivered.

"You need my protection," stammered Roddy. "There is nobody else cares——"

"You are spitting on Lord Sutcliffe," she replied, almost in a whisper.

Roddy's answer was to take Lady Alice's hands in his and hold it there. It fluttered in his like a bird, and tried to withdraw, but his firm fingers were in full possession.

"I love you, dear," said Roddy.

He saw the color flood her cheek, and that look of love in her eyes. And the next moment Roddy had put his arms about her behind the shelter of the deck superstructure, and had kissed her. And she made no more resistance.

"I love you, Alice, and now-I mean to see that we are never parted," he said. "I am going to make you love me, too. You do, my dear, don't you?"

"I am engaged to Lord Sutcliffe," she answered. "I told you."

"When?"

"Some time. I don't know when. It was to have been after the war. But he couldn't leave Prince Hassan, and of course, I would not leave the two enemies of Prince Herod. When he has finished his work in Albania, and I have finished mine, he will marry me."

Roddy took her by both hands and drew her toward him.

"You love me, Lady Alice?" she asked. "If you can look me in the face and tell me that you do, I will go straight back to Sutcliffe and tell him so. I owe him that, at least—and never come into your life again. But I think that fate has thrown us together for purposes. Do you love Lord Sutcliffe, Lady Alice?"

He was holding her in his arms again, and had bent down to kiss her wonder. The beautiful, clear, gray eyes were upturned to his.

"You—have no right—to ask me that," she whispered.

"Do you, Alice?" asked Roddy triumphantly.

"No," she whispered, and releasing herself, fled down the deck.

Roddy stood upright like a man in a happy dream. Life had suddenly become a thing of joy and beauty to him. He watched the white figure to which the yacht was sailing. A tiny quay lay not half a mile distant, and the vessel was heading toward it. He saw the Prince's palace, a low, squarish building, perched on a rock at the top of the town, and evidently both palace and citadel. He was going to a strange land, which, within a few weeks' time, would be his name to him. He was going there with his love, and he would never leave her. He was happy, and Alice was happy in his breast. She was his, never to be parted!

He started round, with that vague consciousness that tells us we are not alone. Lord Sutcliffe was leaning against the deck superstructure, not over a dozen paces away, and watching him with a smile upon his lips. There was a singular look in his eyes, which made Roddy uncomfortable. It seemed to be aware of the episode between himself and Sutcliffe's fiancee.

And Roddy, being, after all, an honorable man, felt a strong sense of shame, though the triumph of his love remained with him.

"I suppose this means a duel!" he mused. "Sutcliffe is just the sort of medieval chap who would demand it, dash."

And he was beginning to wonder whether he should fire in the air or not, when Lord Sutcliffe came up to him and stood before him. And Roddy perceived, to his amusement, that the smile upon Lord Sutcliffe's lips was not one of cynicism, as he had imagined, but of actual kindliness.

"Well, Nicholson," he said heartily, clapping Roddy familiarly upon the shoulder, "why don't you stay with us now and see this thing through? It may prove a valuable—er—newspaper experience."

For a moment Roddy stared at Sutcliffe in astonishment. And then a new understanding was born in him. Lord Sutcliffe had seen the episode, and he had no more desire to marry Lady Alice than Roddy had to marry the Princess Herodias.

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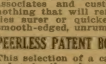

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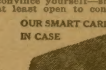

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Roddy clasped Lord Sutcliffe's outstretched hand.

"All right! I'm with you," he answered.

"Then I'll ask you to be my honorary secretary," said Sutcliffe. "That will give you the entree to the palace. Only, of course, you'll act the part and not give that away to your newspaper!"

CHAPTER IX.
CARDS ON THE TABLE.

AS THE vessel drew up toward the quay, the sound of firing among the hills surrounding Durazzo became audible. The Malissori were evidently keeping up a continual fusillade upon the outposts. A yacht was anchored in the harbor. As the ship passed it Roddy could see that it was the Corsair. Of course! He might have known that. Aaron Lapwing's strained boiler-tubes had not prevented him from entering Durazzo well in advance of Prince Hassan's ship.

If Sutcliffe was surprised at the presence of the Corsair, he remained silent, and his face betrayed no sign of emotion when he saw her.

As the yacht was moored to the quay, a body of Prince Hassan's irregulars, who were waiting to welcome him, came galloping along the wharf upon their little ponies, firing their matchlocks and whooping exultantly. Apparently Lapwing had made the news of Prince Herod's capture public, for behind the dense ranks of flies of the infantry a huge crowd pressed and jostled in the endeavor to catch sight of the illustrious prisoner.

Upon the wharf were a number of enormous packing-cases, addressed to Lapwing. They had been shipped to Durazzo from New York. It seemed clear from this that Lapwing's dealings with Prince Herod was of a commercial nature, and apparently upon an extensive scale. As to the contents of the cases, however, Roddy could not obtain the slightest clew.

As the prisoners filed down the gangway, the infantry advanced and formed in square around them. A couple of ancient hacks, drawn by spirited horses, rolled up.

After a brief conversation with the officer in charge of the detachment, Lord Sutcliffe turned to Roddy.

"Nicholson, we are to proceed with our prisoners to the palace immediately," he said. "We shall be lodged there pending their disposition, and his serene highness, Prince Witmar, will see the cases immediately after lunch. You will accompany me in the guise we have determined on. And afterward there may be a good deal more work for you in Albania," he added, smiling.

The sudden change in Sutcliffe's attitude, the cordiality which had replaced a certain arrogant aloofness, impressed Roddy very favorably. He was conscious of feeling a good deal of liking for Lord Ronald Sutcliffe.

The officer issued a sharp order to his men. They brought their rifles up to their shoulders, and, with Lapwing at the head of the quay. Suddenly the Princess, who had been standing like a mummified statue at her father's side, broke through the guard, and, flinging herself upon her knees at Roddy's side, clasped her arms about him and began screaming at the top of her voice.

It was an embarrassing situation for Roddy. The Prince, Lady Alice, Lord Sutcliffe, and the military officer attempted, each in turn, to pacify her, but, since she continued to scream, and none of them dared to lay hands upon her forcibly, there seemed nothing to do but to await her pleasure.

Lady Alice turned to Roddy.

"You must do something to quiet her," she said. "It is very distressing—a woman—"

Roddy bent over Herodias and raised her to her feet. She clung to him passionately, with clasped hands, in front of him. She spoke in Albanian.

"What does she say?" Roddy asked Lady Alice.

"She claims your protection as her fiance," Lady Alice answered, and turned quickly away.

"Nobody is going to harm you, Princess Herodias," said Roddy.

She looked into his face. "Will you marry me this afternoon?" she asked in English.

Roddy was dumfounded. He saw a quick flash of anger leap into the Princess' eyes. Her father turned and stared toward the edge of the wharf. Lord Sutcliffe caught her as she was about to leap into the sea, while she wrestled with him like a wild animal.

"I will marry you when you are ready, Herodias," he said.

And he sighed heavily. But he felt bound in the chains of necessity, and, having given his word, he felt that it could not be broken.

The Princess shot a swift glance at him and suffered the guard to conduct her to the hack. Prince Hassan, Lady Alice, and an armed guard entered it; Prince Hassan, Sutcliffe and Roddy the other. The infantry fell in and off at a walk, the infantry proceeding in front and at the sides. Hassan's irregulars brought up the rear.

"Well, you've committed yourself, Nicholson," said Sutcliffe, with an ugly sneer. "No doubt it was necessary, but, of course, you are not bound by your promise. When one deals with savages, one cannot be bound by the rules of civilized people. What that little devil needs is a ten-foot ox-whip, well laid on. That is the way the Malissori keep their homes in order."

His eye was beginning to discolor, and his face was badly bruised and full of scratches. It was evident that his struggle with Herodias had been a severe one.

Roddy sighed deeply. He was hoping, hoping that the decision in the case of Herod and his daughter would be a drastic one.

The carriages rolled up the steep incline, the infantry accompanying them at the double, and Prince Hassan's irregulars galloping and whooping behind, until, after many turns through the narrow unpaved streets, they came to an archway into the court of the palace of Prince Witmar, the latest occupant of the uneasy throne of Albania.

The sound of musketry fire among the hills behind the building was now much louder, and, from the windows, many rich and accoutered soldiers everywhere, it was evident that the palace was the main objective point of the battle.

The prisoners were led away. Prince Hassan, Sutcliffe, and Roddy were accommodated with small rooms on the second story, near one another. The arrangements were primitive, and it was evident that the Albanian Prince himself had pressed for space in his new residence. Still, the quarters, if not commodious, were clean and fairly comfortable.

Roddy had just time to clean up when lunch was announced. The three dined together in a small salon at the end of the passage. Roddy had been prepared to learn of the most startling revelations in Albania, but, as though by preconcerted arrangement, Prince Hassan and Sutcliffe confined their remarks to reminiscences of their days at Oxford. Immediately after the meal an orderly conducted the three to the reception room which was on the ground floor in another part of the building.

Prince Witmar was a fair-haired, German-looking young fellow of twenty-two or three. He had a slight mustache, an irresolute chin, and an expression of obvious embarrassment and shyness. He was seated at a mahogany table with three or four men of middle age, wearing evening clothes with sashes and decorations over the breast. They were evidently the representatives of the Powers.

Standing, picturesque and statuesque, in the corner of the chamber, were Prince Herod and his daughter, as well as Lady Alice. On either side of Herod and Herodias stood a guard, with a bayonet affixed to a carbine.

It was evident that Prince Herod considered himself a prisoner awaiting immediate execution, for his satanic scowl of defiance was a melodramatic masterpiece. As for the Princess, nothing could be seen of her except a pair of dark eyes that roamed the room with evident interest, lit on Roddy, and stayed there.

The men at the table rose and bowed. Prince Hassan was, of course, well known to them as their chief supporter in the turbulent little country; and also Lord Sutcliffe, whose activities in Albanian politics had made him a figure of international prominence.

The capture of Prince Herod, after he had defied the will of Europe for so long a period, was distinctly a triumph for the Moslem prince, and Hassan was made the recipient of rather ornate compliments from the ministers. Then Sutcliffe introduced Roddy as his secretary, and the three newcomers sat down.

Roddy glanced at Lady Alice. He wanted to offer her a chair, but was in conversation with Prince Herod, and had assumed the role of interpreter.

One of the diplomats, apparently the dean, and, as afterward proved, the leading figure—Count Bernstorff, the Austrian minister, opened the proceedings, addressing Prince Witmar.

"Your serene highness," he began, "we are met here to make as amicable as possible a settlement of the affairs before us. I suggest that our illustrious prisoner take his place among us at this table."

Lady Alice translated this to Prince Herod, but the old man disdained even to acknowledge the courtesy, and remained, with his arms beside his mummy daughter, his eyes fixed in savage hatred upon Prince Hassan. The latter in the negotiations had proved unsuccessful.

Lord Sutcliffe rose.

"Gentlemen," he began, speaking in English, "his highness, Prince Hassan, asks me to place his views before you. Having succeeded in effecting the capture of his highness, Prince Herod, who was unable to bring himself to a peaceful acceptance of the new regime, and had ambitious designs on constituting himself the sole ruler of Albania, we place ourselves and our illustrious prisoner entirely at the disposal of his serene highness, Prince Witmar. This is your highness?" he ended, turning to Prince Hassan.

"Yes," said Prince Hassan, "with a single reservation. My sole desire is to further the interests of Albania, under the mandate of the Powers, and to reunite the Moslem and Christian enlightened ruler, and introduce progressive methods of administration among them. The reservation which I make is a very certain process which alone, in my opinion, will cement the divisions among us."

"What is the reservation, your highness?" inquired Count Bernstorff.

"It is that I, myself, become the husband of her highness, Princess Herodias," answered Prince Hassan, sitting down.

Roddy was amazed to see the expression upon Lord Ronald's face. Consternation, amazement, bewilderment, anger followed each other successively.

Evidently Sutcliffe had not deigned to inform his prime minister of the intention which he had formed. But the latter, as the principality most concerned in the proposed transaction looked on and did not budge a muscle, though it was evident that he had heard this startling proposition. Lord Sutcliffe sprang to his feet and faced Prince Hassan with flashing eyes. But utter a word Count Bernstorff rose again.

"In view of this proposition," he said, "it is now my duty to communicate to your serene highness the decision which has been received from the Powers. My colleagues and I are fully agreed that his serene highness Prince Witmar's choice of their Governments as to the best means for preserving permanent peace in Albania. The document I shall now submit to your serene highness at a later date. The contents I will present to you precisely. In they are that you should yourself marry her highness, Princess Herodias."

Prince Witmar got up slowly out of his chair and looked around him with the expression of a man who has received a mortal blow.

"It is impossible!" he exclaimed harshly.

"Surely not, your serene highness!" said Count Bernstorff, with insinuating smoothness.

"You know the reason!" cried Prince Witmar. "You understood the conditions on which I assumed the Albanian throne."

"But your serene highness must be aware," answered the Austrian minister, "that Mademoiselle is not free. As a public dancer, could not possibly be considered a suitable consort for the Prince of Albania."

"Then I shall resign my crown!" cried Prince Witmar with a dramatic gesture. "I am no puppet to be dragged from the throne you yourself are, your excellency. A puppet monarch, I have obeyed each mandate that I have received from you. But in a matter of the heart I claim the right to make my personal decision!"

It was evident, from the unruffled way in which Count Bernstorff received this declaration, that he was well accustomed to handling just such situations and just

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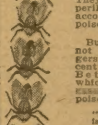

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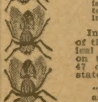

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such outbreaks on the part of his puppet prince.

"Of course," he said, "it is impossible to compel your serene highness to continue to occupy the throne of Albania against your wish, but this sudden decision requires that I communicate it to my Government. Your serene highness will at least postpone consideration of the matter——"

Smash!

Something flew past Count Bernstorff's head and buried itself, still quivering, in the wall behind him. And, following it, the mummified Princess came leaping into the center of the room.

Smack! Smack! Princess Herodias' well-disciplined hands had left their imprint on Count Bernstorff's cheeks. She turned to Roddy with a dramatic gesture.

"This is my husband!" she exclaimed. "We are to be married this afternoon. Is it not so?" she continued, turning to Roddy.

"That was the arrangement," Roddy answered.

"But the suggestion is unparalleled," exclaimed the Italian minister, coming forward. "Surely your highness——"

"His name promised!" cried Princess Herodias fiercely. "And so I have no fear. A brave man like Mr. Roddy does not break his word to a woman."

She returned with a stately movement to her father's side. Roddy, glancing at the old Prince, perceived that there was a gleam of something in his eye, translucent, but unmistakably an appreciation of the situation. Prince Herod had a sense of humor.

And in that moment Roddy knew that it was at her father's command that the Princess had flung the dagger. He knew that it had been aimed to startle, not to kill. And he saw, with a realization of the plump, white hand of Aaron Lapwing, still pulling the hidden strings.

Count Bernstorff, who had by now recovered from the shock of the sudden onslaught, came forward as peacemaker.

"Your serene highnesses, gentlemen," he said, "under the circumstances we must adjourn the Council until tomorrow. I think by that time I shall have further been in communication with our Government, and your serene highness will have had time to reflect upon your decision."

"I don't want time to reflect!" cried Princess Witmar, speaking in the tones of a petulant schoolboy. "I have given you my decision. I will not marry anybody except Mr. Roddy. So there!"

He rose out of his seat, and the proceedings terminated for the day. The Prince, his daughter and Lady Alice departed with the guards. Roddy, looking back, saw the dagger still in the wall.

CHAPTER X.

A WOMAN INTERVENES.

RODDY'S room was on the second story, overlooking a small side street of Durazzo. His bed had been served to him there. Lord Sutcliffe had parted from him almost immediately after the Council meeting, with the intimation that he had better not go outside the palace precincts until the morrow, on account of the popular ferment and the necessity of maintaining the greatest secrecy as to their movements.

However, he had the freedom of the large interior court. He was walking there in the evening, among the silent sentries, looking up at the shuttered windows and wondering which was Lady Alice's. Every moment he had feared a summons from the redoubtable Herodias to become an involuntary bridegroom. Perhaps she was even now awaiting him.

That Lady Alice was for the present beyond his reach he knew. Yet so long as he was alive he was bound by Herodias he felt free; as a man in a dream who, escaping from some awful doom, knows that safety lies for him in the awakening. Roddy felt that this medley of fantasies must soon end.

But he was not one who will nearer the heart of the mystery. The most baffling problem was why he had been selected to be the Princess' husband. The second was, what was Aaron Lapwing doing in Durazzo?

Lord Sutcliffe's purpose, Roddy felt that he understood. He knew of Roddy's love for Lady Alice, and was using him as a means to rescue himself from an espousal of which he had grown weary. To some extent, therefore, their interests were mutual.

It had grown dark while Roddy paced the palace enclosure. The sentries had left the court-yard. Occasionally Roddy could hear their challenging cries in the street without, and the sound of firing among the hills in the far distance.

He was alone, so far as he could determine. As he glanced up at the rows of shuttered windows, however, he perceived something white at a second story window, opposite his own. Stopping to watch it, he discerned that it was a hand. It was a woman's hand, delicate, small, and tapering finely at the wrist. And the hand was unmistakably beckoning to him.

For an instant Roddy thought that it might be a trap. But he felt that if it were the case he intended to ignore it discreetly. But he had kissed the Princess' fingers, and knew that there was no difference between that and any other hand. No, this was not the hand of Princess Herodias.

And it was not the hand of Lady Alice Halliwell, either. Roddy knew Lady Alice's every gesture. Princess Herodias having held it several times. Lady Alice's hand was brown from the sun, and thin, with characteristic wrist bones. Moreover, five or six magnificent jeweled rings gleamed on the fingers. Lady Alice had only a wedding ring and a signet.

Roddy felt convinced that the hand was connected intimately with his own fortunes, and with them he took the plunge, and the shutter went open, very quietly and very discreetly.

Roddy was projected into the face of a fair woman—a very beautiful woman, according to some standards, no doubt, though not his own.

Roddy's present idea of beauty was that of a fair-haired, gentle English girl, with gray eyes, not a tarnished with jet black hair, and an expression that was distinctly—well, common. But it was too late to withdraw his glance. The hand wanted it, for the woman and Roddy were face to face, one looking down, one upward, and the woman's expression told Roddy could not understand what she had said, but the tone and gesture were unmistakable enough. She was evidently inviting him to climb up into the window frame, and the invitation was dictated, apparently, by something approaching fear.

And even then the thought of Aaron Lapwing crossed Roddy's mind, and he could not rid himself of the feeling that he and Herodias, Sutcliffe, the two rival princes, the Italian minister, and this woman at the window, were pawns in some gigantic, crazy, futile scheme of Lapwing's contriving.

A water pipe ran down the outside of the wall adjacent to the window. Roddy placed one foot against it, and began ascending the window-sill. In another moment he had drawn himself up.

As he did so he heard a sound, a click, as of an opening shutter, in the room below.

The shutters of the woman's room closed noiselessly behind him as he leaped to the floor. And then he discovered that he was in the presence of a lady, not a window in one of the palace corridors, and the woman at his side was urging him to a following.

A few steps away was a half-open door, leading into a room that gave upon the front of the place. Roddy hurdle this and half without, stood Prince Witmar, titular ruler of Albania, and actually ruler of Durazzo only by the grace of the Powers.

The woman snatched at Roddy's hand and drew him into the room, and then closed the door behind him. Through the open window Roddy could see the lights of Durazzo. He heard the cries of the sentries and the distant firing.

Prince Witmar turned to Roddy and grasped him warmly by both hands.

"You came to me," he said. "You have come here as a godsend to me, Mr. Nicholson. This gentleman, Loretta, is Mr. Reginald Sutcliffe's secretary at Lord Sutcliffe, and the lover of the Princess Herodias."

"Now, Mr. Nicholson," said Prince Witmar, "I will be as brief as possible. I trust you as I can trust nobody around me, except Mademoiselle Loretta, because our interests are identical. I have sent for my friend, the Metropolitan Archbishop, and he will be here in fifteen minutes. He is going to ascend by the way you ascended—in short, by the water pipe, as soon as Barnum's closes."

"Barnum's?" queried Roddy.

"Yes. Barnum's Hotel across the street. The Metropolitan Archbishop has the password, but, of course, he must not be seen entering the interior court of the palace. Only fifteen minutes, Mr. Nicholson, and we shall both be happier men than we have ever been before."

"Why?" queried Roddy.

"Because," answered Prince Witmar, "he is going to marry me to Mademoiselle Loretta and you to the Princess Herodias."

Roddy did not feel quite so happy as Prince Witmar had anticipated. He looked hard at him. He had received the blow with unflinching bravery, and had survived it, so he supposed that he could stand another.

In this hour of despair the comforting idea occurred to him that a change of government in Albania might render the marriages invalid.

"It is like this," the Prince continued. "I was naturally terribly shocked this morning when Mademoiselle Loretta informed me of the Powers' intentions with regard to my future. But I am going to checkmate that effort. Mademoiselle and you are the only man who can help me do it. Once you are married to the Princess Herodias and Mademoiselle Loretta, Count Bernstorff can't undo the knots. The Orthodox Synod itself cannot undo them. They are both mated for life, beyond any possibility of change. As you know, there is no divorce in the Greek Church."

Roddy felt a curious sinking sensation in his backbone.

"You see, together with you as the occasion demands, Mr. Nicholson," continued Prince Witmar, "Mademoiselle Loretta and I form a combination that can nearly five months. The fact is, my uncle, who is a ruling sovereign, picked me out to occupy this throne because of the idea of getting me away from Paris, where Mademoiselle Loretta was performing when he met her. As I am the one who has hatched this scheme to marry me to that devil of a princess—not because he wants me to have her, but because he does not want me to marry Mademoiselle Cora Loretta. He doesn't approve of the stage, you see.

"Ah, Mon Dieu, I'd like to slap your Uncle William's face!" exclaimed Loretta.

"Well, my friend will have a chance some day, after you have become a princess, my dear," answered the Prince, in French.

"Anyway, Mr. Nicholson," he resumed in English, "once you and her highness are married I am quit of my uncle's problem. It was our own intention to wait until I was more firmly seated on the throne, and then to ask him to withdraw his support, and then that devil of a Prince Herod will take himself off to Paris, and my august uncle wouldn't allow me anything to live on."

"Poor Witmar! I will dance for you," said Mademoiselle Loretta, stroking his forehead.

"But now I have thought that by marrying you to her highness I shall not only checkmate Bernstorff, but shall also have a fresh excuse to remain in Prince continued. "This will give me independence of the Powers. And so I have arranged everything."

"Yes, your serene highness," murmured Roddy dismally.

"I have contrived plans by which Prince Herod will have the opportunity of effecting his escape tonight," said the Prince, "and by which Princess Herodias, conveyed to a near apartment, to which we shall proceed with the Metropolitan, will be married before he arrives. You will be happily married, and I'll furnish a nice little house for you in the suburbs. You will see so that when you get tired of feudal life you can come into town for a change. If you don't mind my asking, I'll order dinner of the Pheasant. Or both, Mr. Nicholson."

As Roddy could not think of any appropriate reply to make, he remained silent. Whereon the Prince, grasping him by the hand, resumed:

"And now, Mr. Nicholson, I shall take you to the apartment in which Princess Herodias is awaiting you. You will appreciate a few minutes alone with her before the ceremony, no doubt, and Mademoiselle Loretta and I will watch at the window for the Metropolitan Archbishop."

Clapping Roddy cordially upon the back, Prince Witmar conducted him from the room, down a short flight of stairs, and along another passage, until he reached a small room at the end. Withdrawing a key from his pocket, he unlocked the door.

Then, having ushered Roddy inside, he withdrew with his sweetheart. Through the closed door Roddy heard the sound of a kiss. Their footsteps receded along the corridor.

Roddy found himself in a dark room. Through an open door leading into the second room of the suite he could see the Princess Herodias, wrapped in her robes, seated at the far end of the interior chamber.

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A MAN tried to sell me a horse once. He said it was a fine horse and had nothing the matter with it. I wanted a fine horse. But I didn't know anything about horses much. And I didn't know that I was very well either.

So I said to him I wanted to try the horse for a couple of days. "All right, but pay me first, and I'll give you a dollar over money if the horse isn't all right. Well, I didn't like that. I was afraid the horse wasn't all right" and that I might have to whistle for my money if I once parted with it. So I didn't buy the horse although I wanted it badly. Now this set me thinking.

You see, I am selling "1900 Washing Machines—The Gravity" Washer.

And I said to myself, lots of people may think about my Washing Machine as I thought about the horse, and about the man who owned it. But I never like to guarantee that anything I write and tell me. You see I sell my Washing Machine by mail. Now there are over 6 million that way.

So, therefore, it is only fair enough to let people try my Washing Machines for a month, before they pay for them, just as I wanted to try the horse.

Now, I know what our "1900 Gravity" Washer will do. It will not only wash the clothes, without wearing or tearing them, in less than half the time it can be washed by hand or by any other machine.

I never saw the machine made of very dirty clothes in six minutes. I know no other machine can do that. Then, what is more, it is wearing out the clothes.

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It is just the water clear through the fibres of the clothes like a force pump might. Then, said I to myself, I will tell the "1900 Gravity" Washer what I wanted the man to do with the horse. I'll take it home, let people ask me. I'll offer first, and I'll make good the offer—and I did.

Let me send you a "1900 Gravity" Washer on a month's trial. Then I'll pay the freight out of my own pocket, and if you don't want to purchase after the month's trial you'll take it back and pay the freight too. Surely that is fair enough?

Doesn't it prove that the "1900 Gravity" Washer must be all that I say it is?

And you can prove it out of what it saves *you*. It will save its whole cost in a few months. It will wash the clothes in half the time. And then it will save 50 cents to 75 cents a week, that is the average cost of washing if you keep the machine after the month's trial. I'll let you have it all out of what it saves you. If it saves you 60 cents a week, send me 50 cents each week till paid. I'll take that cheerfully, and I'll wait for my money until the machine has paid for itself.

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Roddy knew that it was his business to advance and kiss her. She had risen to her feet and stood watching him. And he knew that this was his last chance to explain. If he told her he did not love her——

But could he? Trapped though he had been into this promise of marriage, Roddy had the instincts of a gentleman, which forbade him to go back upon his word, once given to a woman.

He was just forming his ultimate and irrevocable decision when he saw a man's figure in the doorway between the rooms. The next instant the intruder had flung his cloak over his face. The next, he had flung it over Roddy's face, enveloping his head and shoulders, and bearing him backward to the floor.

As Roddy fell he saw a second figure leap through the window in the inner room and seize the Princess in his arms. And Roddy, wrestling furiously upon the floor, found time to reflect that Aaron Lapwing would naturally have selected the same means for kidnaping him the second time as he had utilized the first.

However, there was no intention of kidnaping him. Leaving him upon the floor, still trying to free himself from the enfolding cloak, the man who had attacked him suddenly bolted, following the Princess and her abductor through the window. Next moment Roddy heard a carriage being driven swiftly away along the street.

Oddly enough, Princess Herodias had neither screamed nor struggled; if she had resisted, she must have been so overcome by terror that her struggles were slight indeed.

And, as he rose to his feet and stared about him in bewilderment, Roddy smiled. For he had escaped matrimony by a miracle, and his thoughts went back to Lady Alice again.

And with this new change in his fortune Roddy's spirits leaped up with a bound. And he was resolved to play his own hand henceforward and to be the dupe of nobody. Why should he not kidnap the Metropolitan Archbishop and compel him to marry him to Lady Alice?

But as Roddy stood beside the open window of the inner room, speculating upon this amazing thought that had come to him, suddenly a medley of yells broke out in the street, and he heard a fusillade of rifle firing.

This remarkable story will be continued in the next issue of the Ledger. During the coming months many great stories will appear in these columns. If you are not already a subscriber for this paper, it will repay you to send in a year's subscription. It costs you only $1.00 and you will never regret it. Let us hear from you at once.

* * *

A Careful Housewife.

Gloucester, Mass., is famed for its capable housewives. None of the housewives is more famous than Mrs. Norton.

It was Mrs. Norton who rose early one morning and spent an hour before breakfast in washing and scrubbing an old flight of stairs in her shed, although carpenters were coming that day to tear down the stairs and build a new flight. She did not intend that those carpenters should have an opportunity to tell their wives that any part of her house was not "as neat as wax." But the favorite story that Mrs. Norton's neighbors tell relates to the coalhod.

"Etta," called Mrs. Norton, one day to her husband, who was out in the yard, "I want you to go down cellar and fetch up some coal! And be sure to wash your hands before you touch that coalhod!"

* * *

An Eden Hint.

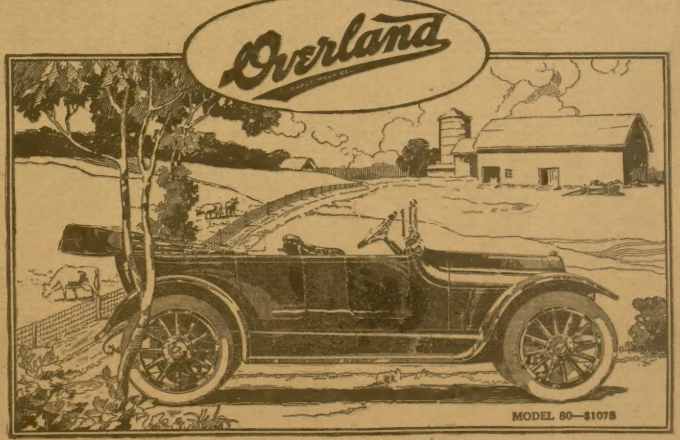
A medium grade apple, no different in any respect from other apples of its kind, stood on a little pedestal in the show window of a local tailor. No other advertisement was used by the tailor, but his scores of patrons were mystified and entirely uninformed as to "Why the apple?"

Questions were shot at the tailor, all directed at what on earth the apple signified. Finally the tailor asked with a complacent smile:

"If it hadn't been for an apple where would the clothing business be today?"

* * *

Women will find it awfully monotonous in Heaven if the fashions never change there.



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The Underground Trail
Or, The Lair of the Mole

By Roger Knowles

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CHAPTER XXX.

"WHERE are my clothes? I've got to get up," said Griswold Lane to the interne as he set down the telephone.

The young man smiled at him with his lids, in professional deprecation. "It is quite impossible," he assured the patient. "He sat up in bed, preparing to put his threat into execution.

The interne, reaching his side in a step, grasped him by the shoulders and thrust him back; Lane was much weaker than he had realized. "It will be quite possible for you to think of getting out of bed before tomorrow," the interne began. "In cases of partial asphyxiation——"

He got no farther. A sound of half-repressed voices and the shuffle of feet had been approaching along the corridor reached the door of the ward, and Chief McInerny, accompanied by a little knot, a couple of plain-clothes men, and a handful of subdued nurses, entered.

"Oh, it's the boy, is it?" observed the chief, in tones of relief. "We thought it might be Doe. Where's Doe?"

"If you'll kindly let the medical gentleman on the head, and admit a little light into him, I'll soon take you to Doe." Lane retorted, irritably. He had not liked the suggested operation with a jerk of the head. He was sitting on the edge of the bed, his hands clasped. The position made him a bit dizzy, but he had hold of life again, and something was under his hand to be done. "Bring me my clothes, one of you, and don't stop to put it down on the chart," he went on, addressing the cluster of nurses. "I've got a little stew for you to taste this morning, Chief. I'll make your mouth water. Got any men?" Lane was sensible of an exhilaration and confidence in picking up life once more; a sensation of being master of the present.

"Two wagon loads, and all ready for trouble," the chief told him.

"They're likely to have it." Lane resumed. He related enough of his late experiences as he was dressing, for a foundation of what plans upon. Before he left the hospital with McInerny and Bartlett, every approach to the Horton house, above and above ground, had been covered by men with orders to let no one through in either direction.

As he was leaving the ward, Lane turned to the medical student. "Follow me," he directed. "A police man did so, without question, bringing up the rear in the wake of a lieutenant of detectives and two patrolmen serenely unconscious of his individual existence.

When Herkimer Horton's butler, opening the front door, beheld Griswold Lane confronting him at the head of an imposing band and official-looking persons, his well trained jaw dropped humanly, and a cold sweat atomized on his forehead.

Whittlesey, the young detective, addressed him importantly. "Is good enough to inform Mr. Horton that Mr. Griswold Lane, together with a few of his friends, would like to speak with him. Make our apologies for disturbing him at this hour, please. And you might mention that we have men at every door and in the yard. I speak of it so that he will not lose any time foolishly before seeing us."

"Mr. Horton is out of the house, sir," stammered the butler, finding a hoarse voice at last.

"And Miss Horton?"

"Is with her father."

"Very well, Lieutenant, you might take this man into custody."

The lieutenant nodded, a plain clothes man stepped forward, and the butler was led away.

With as much speed and as little noise as a possible, the party ascended to the room where Lane had encountered Herkimer Horton three eventful hours before. Two detectives were put on the patrolman there and went on. "Watch that wall: there's a door in it." Lane instructed the chief.

Without ado he led them to Eleanor's room. She was not there; thorough search of the house, however, brought no sign of her having been brought there after her rescue. Lane thumped the walls, tapped the knowledge of the interior of the house. He did not trouble himself to inquire after her among the servants, so that they got out of sight.

Lane led them over the rest of the house in cursory search. "They won't be here," he said. "But we might just as well have a look, and trim off the edges before we get down to cutting whole cloth."

They returned presently to Horton's room. Without a word, Lane stepped over to the panelled wall. Doe, though which he had entered with Doe, and began careful search, scrutinizing the joinery, and thumping here and there at last upon the one he sought. They did not stop to look for the controlling device, but Lane, with a push of his shoulders and clubs.

It gave; the brick stairs stood revealed beneath them. "This way," said Lane, and started down the steps.

CHAPTER XXXI.

THE narrowness of the stairs compelled them to proceed in single file. Lane, with a bull's-eye borrowed from the chief, led the way, a pistol in his hand. The others followed with drawn weapons. Lane permitted them no lights, and flashed his only now and then, at intervals.

Their way to the subterranean chamber was unimpeded by the portcullis with that had been dropped into place in the curtain wall when he and Eleanor were confined in the dungeon. Griswold Lane, wheeling one fast flash of inspection through the apartment, saw that it was empty.

He was surprised to find the door lifted; the circumstance made him suspect a trick. He pressed the others back from the door to consider for a moment. He turned to Chief McInerny. "Send three or four of the men upstairs to take the house; beds for them to have them bring all they can find of those sidebars that join the head and foot," he whispered. "Then do it as quick about it, and quiet."

The others waited silently until those who had been detailed returned with arms full of the rigid angle irons. Lane directed how they should be placed as struts under the portcullis, so that it could not be dropped on them as they passed, or behind them after they were in the room. That done, he led them in with a feeling of security.

The apartment was rancid with the odor of explosives. The intruders were playing into all its corners. Lane recalled the moment when the light had gone out, and a sharp pang of anxiety thrust through him. But it did not decrease his high assurance that all would end well.

The cellar was deserted. "Nothing doing here," said the chief, at the end of a minute's search with his light, which Lane had returned to him at the door. "They've given you the slip this time, boy."

"Wait," was all the young man said. Then began curious conduct on his part. Snatching the searchlight again from McInerny's hand, he ran scurrying about the chamber like a rat looking for quick escape through a hole, his eyes following the white spot that the light jerked out of darkness, all his alert attention concentrated on what the disk discovered. Up and down and across the floor he went, leaving not a foot unscrutinized; along each wall and patch of wall, paying especial heed to the faces and flanks of the buttresses. With less experience of the young man, McInerny and the others would have laughed at him; and, in truth, there was provocation, for Griswold Lane had a manner before them that was due to youth at an advantage.

He found the door by which he had entered from the tunnels, and flung it open, touching by chance the footboard that contained it within as well as without the room. But he gave the passage behind it only a cursory glance, knowing that escape was cut off by those watching men; he was more interested in one of the buttresses across the room.

He returned to it now, more than once times. He returned to it now. There was something about one flank of it that disturbed him. Its relation to the basement was not identical in appearance with the rest of the wall; not identical with the buttress on the other side of the entrance. It lacked the feeling of massiveness and stability! It seemed superficial; artificial.

He examined it more minutely. The traveling gleam of his bull's-eye swept slowly enough to scrutinize the edge of the buttress flank. As it did so, a light came into the young man's eyes. There was, all about the edge, a thin line, along where its plane traced the planes of adjacent surfaces, a tiny, threadlike, straight-edged crack, sharply cut, unnoticeable. He had come upon a secret door.

He remembered that Doyle, entering the secret door like this, had opened it by pressing against a certain spot in the wall. He turned his attention to the neighborhood. He found a reddish pebble, no bigger than a pea. The pebble seemed a knob in the socket; it was not solidly imbedded. He signaled the others to stand closer. They ranged behind him, with drawn guns. "Are you ready?" he whispered.

A circumspect clearing of throats, a rustling adjustment of bodies to preparedness for exigency, a soft scrape of a foot against the floor, beneath an enveloping silence, that meant that they were. He thrust his thumb against the reddish pebble. It gave beneath the pressure. At the left flank of the buttress swung slowly back.

A flood of light, bursting upon them through the aperture, vanished with a click. At the instant of its duration Lane, crowding through the opening, had caught a glimpse of Herkimer Horton standing behind a paper-littered table, gazing at the point of intrusion with the baleful hate of a beast at bay.

CHAPTER XXXII.

THE zone of light from Grlawold's flash picked him out of the surrounding darkness, and revealed the set, its white disk. The weapon which the ruined man raised was knocked from his fingers by the young man's revolver before he had time to press the trigger. In the next breath, Lane confronted him across the table, the trembling tip of his weapons resting lightly among the papers. The two stood among the interlacing flights of half a dozen bull's-eyes. "I guess it's all over, too, Mr. Horton?" the young man began.

"What is the meaning of this unwarrantable intrusion by citizen in the privacy of his home?" flung out Horton, with a show of ferocious indignation. Out of the tunnels behind him came the sound of fingers rustling paper.

"Privacy is good," remarked Lane laconically. "Would you be kind enough to turn on the lights?"

Horton, reaching a button under the ledge of the table, snapped them into the room. Lane, still watchful of the man opposite, cast a hasty glance about the apartment in which he found himself. Excepting a lack of windows, which was not at once apparent, he could have believed that he was in one of the more sumptuous bachelor quarters of the city. The room was spacious, elegant; luxurious within good taste. It was provided with every convenience of the accomplished comfort. The walls were lined with bookshelves, well stocked; there were excellent pictures, splendid rugs, deep cushioned chairs. Lane grasped the meaning of it in a flash. It was Horton's subterranean headquarters, the place where Doyle had lived in secret—the lair of the mole. How long had the unconscious city slept over this nest?

"Where is Doyle?" demanded Lane, turning from his swift inspection.

"I know no such person."

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Every druggist sells Resinol Ointment and Resinol Soap, and physicians have prescribed them for 20 years in the treatment of skin troubles.

"You knew him well enough early this morning, when he was shot in your room upstairs. Will you tell us where he is?"

"I will not." The hands were moving surreptitiously among the papers on the table.

"Will you tell me where your daughter is?"

"In her room, I presume, or in the breakfast-room."

"She was rescued from asphyxiation in the chamber outside this room and brought to your house from the drug-store at the corner at half-past six this morning. She is not upstairs. Where is she?"

"I know nothing about it. It is news to me. She was not brought here."

Lane turned to the chief with a shrug and a jerk of the hand. "It's no use, McInerny," he said. "Take him to Weil and talk with him later. Mr. Horton, we find it necessary to place you under arrest as accessory before the fact to the murder of Mayor Arlington. Never mind stopping to arrange those papers. I will spare you the trouble."

A pallor and sign of distress swept across the man's face for the first time, but he suffered himself to be led away without the show of emotion. He looked neither to the right nor the left, and said no word as he passed out of the room.

"Well, what next?" said Chief McInerny, when the man was gone. "Where do you expect to find Doyle now?"

"You don't suppose that this is the only room down here, do you?" rejoined Lane. "There are more than a few feet of us right now, behind some of these partitions. All we've got to do is to find the door at the back of those buried apartments. What's that?"

From the farthest side of the room came the sound of a slipping latch, and a panel slid slowly out of place.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

AT THE first faint sound Griswold Lane had thrown off the light. He waited, hand on the switch, until he heard a second footfall in the room before he whipped it on again. The burst of illumination revealed a man whom Lane had not expected standing at the edge of the room. Half a dozen revolvers covered him.

"For God's sake, gentlemen, don't shoot," he cried, throwing up his hands. "I'm only a physician."

"Are there any?" asked Lane. He could see, through the aperture by which the physician had entered, another apartment from which several doors opened.

The physician nodded.

"Both of them? Doyle and Miss Horton?"

The man nodded again.

"Alive?" Lane's chin was ready to snap, but he held steady.

"The man is dying; he cannot recover."

"And the girl?"

"Resting easily. She is enjoying a natural sleep at present."

"Take him," Lane directed.

The other made haste to respond. Nodding to the interne, who had passed through the interesting adventures in a daze, to follow, Lane went with the physician. "No one was hurt?" the man asked, as they came into the room.

"No one," Lane replied. "Miss Horton first, if you please."

Only the interne from the hospital went with them through the door of her room. The girl, still pale, slept easily. "She is in no danger?" Lane asked.

The physician who had attended her assured him that she was not, but the young man was not satisfied till he signaled the interne to withdraw. The student, passing to the side of the bed, watched her closely for a space. "I should think she was all right, sir," he whispered, turning to Lane.

"Remain here with her, if you will," Lane directed, and motioned the other to take him to Doyle.

Doyle was in a stupor induced by narcotics. Lane looked at the still face in fascination. It was a blank mask as it lay on the pillow; there was not the trace of a line upon it. It was as inscrutable as Lane had found every phase of the man to be. As he looked at him, Lane desired more than ever to penetrate the secret of the baffling personality that had revealed itself in a dozen contradictions in his experience of him. He knew that there was some infallible law in the man's nature by which everything might be interpreted; that held all the apparent vagaries in one web of consistency. He was irritated tremendously to lay hold of that law.

"You need not stay longer," he said to McInerny and the others when he returned to the outer apartment. "You might leave a man or two outside, Chief. I want to look through these papers that Horton seemed so anxious to hide."

They filed out and left him alone. An hour later the physician tiptoed into the room to announce that Doyle had come out of his stupor. "If you wish to speak with him, you had better come at once," he said. "I believe that he is going."

CHAPTER XXXIV.

DOYLE met Lane's eyes with a smile as he drew a chair to the side of the bed and sat down. "Boy," he said, "I'm proud of you. I always was, but—"

Lane acknowledged the compliment with a brief nod. "How long have you known Horton?" he asked abruptly.

"Too d—d long," returned Doyle, lackadaisically.

"I suppose you know that he is your father?"

Doyle's brows lifted in genuine surprise. "Has the old man caved?" he inquired.

"I've been looking over some papers. I have been wondering how much of them you got hooked up with him? What was the idea? You didn't see him for thirty years. You might as well talk. It's all over."

"Blackmail. Hold-up. I got the dope on him two years ago, when my mother died. One of those death-bed confessions; low lights, slow music, and all that. She made me promise to find him, she was entitled to it. I hunted him up, and tried to start something. He was too much for me. I didn't want to make trouble, and he had the goods on me. We compromised. I've been doing the underground graft ever since."

"You lived down here?"

Doyle nodded.

"I guess I've got it all cleaned up now," Lane remarked. "There are one or two little things that stick me, though. How did he manage to bunch the three, and that den outside, and those stairs, and all that, without creating a sensation? How did he get the work done? How did he get the work done? Would you mind telling me that, to satisfy my personal curiosity?"

"Well, I'd been a boss contractor among other things in my life, and I'd formed a pretty wide acquaintance among people I could depend on. Money talks, but it does more than that. It stops talk. It's worth the price."

"When? When the house was built?"

"Remember that he had some repairs and alterations made in the house, and he was installing the tunnel system?"

Lane felt that he could guess the rest. "And who did the work?" he asked.

Doyle broke into a grin. "McGuire?" he echoed. "Why, he's tunnel watchman for the entire district."

"I mean your McGuire? Who is he—the man I made the bluff about?"

Doyle chuckled. "That's your McGuire, instead of mine, isn't he? I've known a number of McGuires, first and last, but none to whom I lay any peculiar claim."

Lane dropped a polite expletive of accumulating enlightenment. He was beginning to comprehend. "How did you come to spring him on me?" he inquired. "How did you happen to mention his name that time you dealed with me to your cell about escaping? How did you know I would bite?"

Doyle chuckled for a time before he replied. "Well, it's very simple," he began. "You see, I happen to have a sense of humor, as a quality that would recommend you to cultivate for use in your profession. I foresaw the possibility, when I pulled off the big job that investigation might lead to the tunnels, and I laid a little trap, by way of a joke and a blind. I knew the sort of detective I was willing to put in wrong. One of them was the detective in general, and the other was McGuire. It struck me that on the chance that it would be found, and would lead the sleuths on a false scent to McGuire, it would be rather a pleasant joke on McGuire, and would keep the officers out of mischief. It didn't work out as I expected."

Lane was still puzzled. "But how did you happen to spring it on me? That's what I can't make out."

"Well, that's where the luck came in. I just let it drop at random, and it struck root. That's all there is to that."

"When did you get next to me, Doyle, anyhow?" burst out the young man, frankly, after a pause.

The dying man smiled. "When you had your false beard on me and the talk about McGuire, of course."

"And you kept stringing me all along, so that I would dig you out of jail, expecting all the time——"

"To do just what I did," Doyle finished for him. "All but the getting shot," he amended, whimsically. "That was Horton's fault, d—n him. He always was crude when it came to the rough stuff. But he was a wiz at doping it out!"

The man's voice trailed out thin; his face was set in pain. "Well, old chap, I'm going out," he resumed faintly. "Sorry we didn't meet sooner." His lids were closed; it was hard to believe that the impassive face still covered life. The spectacle of death, and the man's meeting it in this manner, was incredible.

"You're not going to die," said Lane foolishly. "I don't believe you are going to die."

Doyle smiled faintly. "Well, I've been putting it over on you more or less all morning, and it looks as though I was going to put another over on you, old chap, if that's your opinion," he said, in a hoarse whisper. "Good-by, my boy. You're game, all right, if you are a bit callow. Just give my regards to McGuire, won't you?"

The voice died out as the mouth curled into a grin at the jest that passed through the stiffening lips, with the death rattle at its heels. With the grin still on his face, the man's passion subsided, stiffened, and settled on his final bed, grinning at the life he had led and the end to which it had brought him—grinning horribly.

It was because of the grin that Lane was sorry for him.

CHAPTER XXXV.

GRISWOLD LANE arose, nodded to the physician, who had stood apart during the scene, and left the room. He crossed the hall to the room in which he had left Eleanor asleep. The door was ajar. He knocked at a panel, softly. The interne came in response. They exchanged question and answer in glances.

"Who's there?" came in the voice of Eleanor, anxious, apprehensive.

The interne swung the door wide, and Griswold stepped inside.

At sight of him the girl uttered a low cry of relief and ineffable joy. He kneeled swiftly beside her. For a space they clung to each other in hungry gaze. It was the girl who broke the silence.

"Griswold!" was all she said, stretching out pale arms to him.

The interne turned away, wondering at the affairs of heaven and earth.

A shadow of distress crept into her face, and deepened. She thrust him gently from her. "Oh, I must not be so happy, Griswold," she said. "Oh, it is too horrible!"

Griswold understood. "I have brava news of your father," he told her. "I can give you comfort."

She searched him with a look of eager appeal.

"Your father is ——"

"What? What?" she cried, when he hesitated.

"Is not your father."

A sigh of sublime relief arose through her parted lips. It was as though a burden of all her years had been lifted.

"Do you remember the case I was working on when all this began?" he continued. "About the orphan that was being sought?"

"Yes!" she breathed.

"Shall I tell it to you now, dear heart?"

"Not now. Not now. I do not want to think about it now. There is only one thing in all the world that I care to think of now."

She held forth her arms to him once more.

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That awful pest
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And thumps me on the back

For two whole days this week I thought
I'd given him the slip
I did, when on the job
They laughed along,
And said: "He's got the grip!'

They spoke the truth; the bore returned,
And clung to me with pride.
We have been stuck,
But turned the trick—
You see, I haven't died"

I looked him over spitefully.
For I was good and sore.
And said: "You bet!
I wish you had."
He'll bother me no more

He Finished.

"You ought to have seen Mr. Marshall when he called to see Dolly the other night," remarked Johnny to his sister's young man. "I tell you he looked fine sitting alongside of her with his arm—"

"Johnny!" screamed his mother frantically.

"—around her," whined the boy, "I was—"

"John," said his father, "leave the room!" And Johnny left, crying as he went.

"I was only going to say that he had his army clothes on!"

Just Like Mother's.

"Now, dear," hesitated John, "what about cooking?"

"Well, Jack," confessed the two-day-old bride, "when we got back from our honeymoon your mother is going to tell me just how to cook the things you like."

"I say, old girl, you're an awful sport to let the mother give you a hint or two."

"The wise one merely smiled mysterious-ly."

Three weeks later, Jack, hardly so usual of countenance, superintended the disposal of their evening meal.

"Say," he grumbled, as he glared, knife in hand, at a certain specimen of cookery for two, "what's the matter with the crust on this pie? It doesn't half cover it!"

"Why, dearest," answered the anxious young wife, as she came and gazed at it, "I thought you'd like it pleased! Your mother said you always liked the crust rather short!"

Office Boy—"I'm assistant to the manager now."
Janitor—"Shucks!"
Office Boy—"When collectors come in I assist him to throw them out."

A Juror Needed Information.

A member of the bar tells of a case where the defendant was the thief of a watch. The evidence having been most conflicting. As the jury retired the judge observed that he would be glad to help in adjusting any difficulties that might present themselves to the minds of the jury.

Eleven of the jurors had filed out of the box. The one who remained wore an expression of extreme perplexity. Observing his hesitation, the judge said: "Is there any question you would like to ask me?"

"Yes, your honor," said the juror eagerly. "I'd be glad if you'd tell me whether the prisoner really stole the watch."

A Safe Bet.

"Right in the midst of the advice you were giving him, you broke off and hurried away."

"That's what I did!"

"But he was listening deferentially to all you had to say."

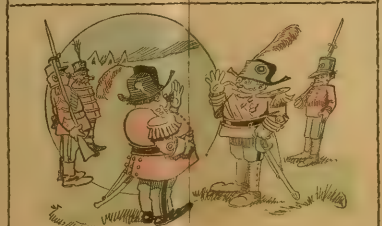
"You bet he was! I never had a man listen to me that deferentially that he didn't try to touch me for $5 before I got away."

They Needed Bringing Up.

Mother—"Oh, ma'am, what shall I do? The cubs have fallen down the well!"

Fond Parent—"Dear me! how annoying! Just go into the library and get the last number of the Modern Mother's Monthly. It contains an article on 'How to Bring Up Children.'"

Riffkins—"Has our Congressman done anything for the district?"
Wilkins—"He sent to mahine and shed this season, but next year he promises we'll get spades, rakes and garden hose."



The Field Marshal—"In exchange for your General Grimbaffle for our General Staff, we can let you have your prisoners.
The General—"If it's all the same to you we'd rather have a horse."

A SURE SIGN.

Now lovers' sighs and lovers' lies,
Are heard beneath the mystic moon.
And maidens coy achrill with joy,
Bestow their pledges as a boon;
And oh, you see, there's bound to be
A bumper crop of brides in June.

Took Out No Fish.

Owner—"Here, what are you doing with my boat? Don't you know you're not allowed to take fish out of this water?"

Angler (three hours without a bite)—"I'm not taking them out. I'm feeding it to them."

Not His Fault.

"How's this, sen? Yesterday you cleaned up $1,000 on the turf, but today it looks worse than ever."

"It's not my fault, Sad, I feed everything over the fence, but last night the 2/16 kid next door slammed 'em back."

A Gentle Hint.

Tramp—"I'd like to borry a medical almanac, mum."

Housekeeper—"What for?"

Tramp—"I wants ter see wut th' doctors all says recommend for an empty feelin' in th' stummick."

A Hungry Soldier's Request.

At a soldiers' encampment near Clarton-on-the-Sea, England, a medical officer was going the rounds of inspection, and was questioning the men.

"Ah, Murphy, how are you this morning?"

Private M.—"Much better, sir."

M. O.—"Is your appetite good?"

Private M.—"Yes, sir."

M. O.—"Are you getting enough to eat?"

Private M.—"No, sir."

M. O.—"What would like in addition to your present diet?"

Private M.—"Another pound of bread, sir."

M. O.—"That I cannot give you, as the regulations do not permit of a soldier's receiving a double ration of bread in any one day."

Private M. (after a moment's hesitation)—"Would you let me have the extra pound, and mark it down as bread pudding?"

He got it.

REAL ECONOMY.

The women of the South are wise
Are not oblivious to style;
They fashion, at the call, to-day
Garb for the week, costumes of grass.

They do not make these up in haste—
Their native skirts can boast no waist
And so they lavish all their care
On the sole garment that they wear

A bit of skirt they use for shears,
And where a straggling wisp appears
They snip it off; for they condemn
Any divergence in the hem.

For dress or flairs, I'm told that they
Weave here and there among the hay
Bright flowers, with consummate skill—
And yet they have no florist's bill

No pumps for them; each damsel goes
With many-tinged bare toes
And round each ankle clasps a chain
Of nearby two, if she is vain.

Oh, how I wish that Isabel
Could dress so cheaply and so well!
She needs a lot of it, you know—and yet
If they were grass I'm sure she'd fret

Tall Boy—"Wrongles is an egotistical chap. See him nosing on the street cars."

Little Dub—"Yes, he has the idea that visitors haven't seen the town until they've seen him."

A Permanent Attraction.

Clara—"Are you not afraid that some one will marry you for your money?"

Flora—"I would rather be married for money than for beauty."

"Of all things! Why?"

"Beauty fades but money can be kept at interest."

A Callous Man.

"Some men are so unfeeling."

"How now?"

"My husband deliberately took a pair of socks I was knitting for the poor soldiers and wore them. Said he hadn't any."

A Grateful Waiter.

I was sitting at my desk when Black Sam, who assistant waits on me at my restaurant, entered my office.

"What can I do for you, Sam?" I asked.

"I got a chance to change mah situation, Mistah Clark," he said. "Yo' kin say a good word fo' me, can't you? Tell 'em I'm honest."

"Of course," I hesitated, "you're a good waiter, Sam, but don't know anything especially about your honesty."

"Yo' kin tell 'em dat, an' say yo' thinks I'm honest. Dat'll be enough."

So I promised I would.

"Thank yo', thank yo', Mistah Clark," he said, with a deep bow. "When yo' come over tomorrow, sit at mah table, an' I'll give yo' a shot o'rock."

HOW IT ALWAYS ENDS.

He thought it would be well to save
A little of his pay
And so he'd every week
His wife one Saturday.

On Monday night she smiled in bliss
And held her new hat high,
And then with Sister emphasis
He merely said, "Good buy!"

Pa's Vindictiveness.

"George, father has failed."

"That's just like him! I told you all along, Darling, that he was going to do all he could to keep us from being married."

Why He Complained.

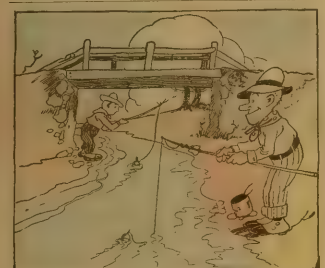
Some people are never satisfied. For example, the prisoner who complained of the literature that the prison chaplain gave him to read.

"Tuffy" but continued stories," he grumbled. "An' I'm to be hung next Tuesday."

Not Necessary.

Prospective Father-in-law—"You've got some nerve to ask me for an advance payment of the dowry. I think you are a fortune hunter."

The Count—"Oh, no, monsieur, I am only what you Americans call as 'safety first' crank."—Puck.



"Say, this can't fish under that bridge. You won't get a bite!"
"What, now, don't you know that all the fishes will flock under here to get in out of the rain?"

War in the Future.

General (when bullet-proof uniforms become common)—"What have you learned?"

Aid—"Victory will soon perch upon our banners. We have filled the enemies' clothes so full of lead that they can't move another step without undressing."

Liked Church, But—

Sweet Girl—"Do you enjoy taking me to church?"

Lover—"Not so much as riding with you in a street car."

"Goodness! Why?"

"The sermon never yells, 'Pit closer, please.'"

"Say, this can't fish under that bridge. You won't get a bite!"
"What, now, don't you know that all the fishes will flock under here to get in out of the rain?"

Another Reason.

"Why do you want to get married?"

"Because I'm tired of living alone."

"Why don't you get a dog?"

"Because I'm tired of living alone."

Not Guilty.

"Why do you call your dog Guilty?"

"Because he's always caught in the act."

Not Necessary.

Mrs. Nubbins—"The Nodders had a lawn mower come today."

Mrs. Nubbins—"Thank Heaven! I was afraid we'd have to buy one of our own."

"Say, this can't fish under that bridge. You won't get a bite!"
"What, now, don't you know that all the fishes will flock under here to get in out of the rain?"

A FISHERMAN'S LUCK

Blinks—"Now, while I'm waiting for the big motorboat race I'll throw in my book and see if I can't catch a fish——"

"Ha! a big bite already! And here comes another too! That fish pulls like a whale!"

"What are ya doin' there, ya big chump! Can't ya see I've got a fish on this line?"

"Dog-gone the rotten luck! Them blitherin' boobs have spoiled the best catch I've had this season!"

America's Secret War

Or, International Intrigue

By Marquis James

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CHAPTER XIX.

THE PLOTTERS TRAPPED.

IT WAS evident from the scene that slumbered that Roderick Wright, who two months ago had drifted into Fort Rosencrans, ostensibly an irresponsible tourist with nothing more to worry about than the spending of a fictitious fortune which his equally fictitious uncle had left him, and Ralph Guthrie, the "green service lieutenant," had swiftly risen to be personages of some importance.

The manner in which they gave commands to the ship's company and the celerity and precision with which these orders were obeyed, demanded them as individuals of certain high authority. Even the captain of the ship stood respectfully by when either spoke.

"Certain, order Franklin, the steward, held, and permit no member of the crew to go ashore pending an investigation of the circumstance surrounding the presence aboard this ship of that Indian who has just stepped out our charge, Miss Sigbee. It is evident there has been treachery somewhere. I go ashore now and will return until I bring the girl with me. By that time, I hope you will have discovered the guilty parties. I will dictate their punishment."

It was Wright who spoke. He appeared to be most of the talking. Guthrie stood by and said nothing, but, for all his silence it would not have taken a microscopic observer to have perceived that he was the leader in the enterprise that had snatched Marjorie from California and transported her to the South Seas.

"Did you notice whether the plans were safe before you left the ship?" asked Wright, as he and Guthrie made their way through the jungle in pursuit of the fleeing Marjorie and her rescuer.

"Yes, that was the first thing I did," Guthrie responded, comprehending the latter's sole motive aboard the ship was to take the girl from us. "I think he knew nothing of the real purpose of our voyage."

"You cannot rely so much on his ignorance. He would have known he should have followed the automobile of the Black Pour with such rapidity, and secreted himself aboard the ship and kept hidden during the entire voyage, shows he is no ordinary person to deal with. There is no reckoning how much he knows."

"You are right there, but I have taken elaborate precautions to make copies in triplicate of the plans. We are not to be foiled as easily as poor old Colonel Sigbee. If they get from us the original plans, we will have the two duplicate copies."

"First of all, we should find Sanders," Wright suggested. "Doubtless he is unaware of our approach. Doubtless, too, he is puzzled and knows not what to do next, having heard no word from Sigbee that would assure him that his documents had been safely received at Rosencrans."

"You omit the most likely probability of all," Guthrie replied. "Doubtless Sanders already is a prisoner. He is very much be dead. Though he is the most intrepid and resourceful operative in the service of the Government, he is not likely that he alone could cope with the situation on this island long."

"You are correct, Lieutenant. It is my judgment that our first effort should be directed at finding Sanders and leave this madcap girl who knew not one and as for the Indian. I have no hopes of winning him over by persuasion. We must make for her until we reach the ship's hold. And you know what that means!"

"Yes," returned Wright. "We must get them all aboard the ship in order to put to sea in order that its presence in the harbor will not arouse suspicions."

"You are correct, Lieutenant."

This conversation took place as the two men made their way through the jungle which they had turned back from the village. They traversed again and again every foot of the ground near where Sanders had been seized by the Indian land in the ship's boat. Yet they saw no sign or trace of the fugitives.

They had been searching two hours. Meantime the tropical sun had mounted midway in the heavens and cast its perpendicular rays upon the island of Tahoto with merciless vigor. The jungle was baked as in an oven, and while it was cooler under the canopies beneath the labyrinth of trees and vines, it heated the atmosphere to a stifling degree that quickly exhausted any one who was not accustomed to the climate.

By common consent, Guthrie and Wright suspended their labors and stretched themselves down upon the ground to rest. They were distant from Tachoto, oh they would not have done this. While not a mile from the village which contained the rulers of the island, their life and safety depended upon constant vigilance.

A few minutes after they had laid down they succumbed to the superheated atmosphere, and both were sound asleep. Guthrie was the first to awaken. He sat up with a start, cupped his hand against his ear and listened intently. He heard a peculiar rustling sound like the flight of heavy jungle. No second thought was needed to assure him that it was the voice of a girl.

Instantly he thought of Marjorie. It was her voice, he was sure—raised in a shrill cry. He leaped to his feet again as if to catch the direction from which the sound came. It was not far distant. He advanced a few steps with the intention of locating it more directly, then awakening Wright and setting out in search.

By intermittent halts and advances, the voice lured him farther away from his sleeping companion. He had located the voice with some definiteness, he made his way back to where he had left Wright.

He reached the spot. He saw his companion's hat, but that was all. Wright was gone. Possibly he had awakened in the meantime, and had wandered off in another direction in an effort to find his companion. The latter frowned with vexation, feeling sure Wright would hear the signal.

He waited for a response. None came. He hallooed again, louder than before, but ere the echo of his cry had died away, a blow sent him prostrate upon the ground. A brown man, half naked, was upon him. A knife was between his teeth.

The brown man had leaped from a bough in the tree overhead straight astride Guthrie's shoulders. The two tumbled on the ground. Guthrie's assailant was Hugi, the head-hunter. Hugi was furious. His task encountered a white man had been the one with Sanders. Hugi had failed to kill his victim, and resolved not to repeat this disgrace by permitting Guthrie to escape alive.

CHAPTER XX.

POWER BEHIND THE THRONE.

CRUEL, crafty old Tubora Tumaida lolled back in the luxuriously pillowed seat in the resplendent gold and ivory palanquin which four of his slaves bore through the streets of the village of Maraitan. A gold cigarette of a Parisian make drooped from his thin lips. A herald, elaborately garbed in native costume, preceded the royal equipage.

To all appearances Tubora Tumaida might truly say, "I am monarch of all I survey, my right there is none to dispute." Tubora Tumaida was ruler absolute of the island of Tsohoto. A palace, a harem replenished each year by the most beautiful maidens of the island, gold and power were his.

But for all these things, there was a look of ardent displeasure on the face of Tubora Tumaida. And if one could have observed closely, he would have noted that this look of displeasure was not unmixed with a trace expression of alarm. The streets of the native capital slumbered silently, baked in the oven of the tropical noontide. Few stirred about. There was no wild acclamation by the populace of his majesty's approach. Certainly Tubora Tumaida's subjects were in a perverse mood, and their sovereign was the object of their displeasure. For the most part they remained indoors in preference to exhibiting their contempt openly by appearing on the streets and following after with their knees when the King passed by, as was required. Those who did remain on the streets went through the ceremonial of obeisance. But these salaams were carried out in such a half-hearted way that the ruler of the King was in the highest disfavor with his people.

These were the things that vexed Tubora Tumaida, the ruler of Tsohoto. In other days he would have punished such a spirit of mutiny on the part of his subjects by having half a hundred of them in chains and celebrating a public execution. But now he dared not take such a course. His hands were tied.

Tubora Tumaida's minions bore him to his magnificent palace on the border of the town. They proceeded with their royal burden through the vast and beautiful gardens, and mounted the steps of the wonderful palace. Then they lifted him from his chair, and two of the stoutest men, making a basket of their joined hands, bore him to his door.

They carried him into a room of high ceilings and great dimensions, the walls of which were ivory and gold. The great windows contained no glass and were perpetually open, except in times of storm, when shutters hung over the apertures, excluding the rain from the throne-room. The slaves carried Tubora Tumaida to his throne, a gigantic chair of carved teakwood, mounted on a platform at one end of the room.

There were several persons waiting on the long benches which lined the sides of the room. Each arose, bowed low and knocked his forehead against the mosaic floor, remaining in that prostrate attitude of humiliation until the King gave the word for them to rise.

Tubora Tumaida's callers came on various missions. Each had reported serious discontent against the present rule in their localities. For the cruel island monarch was the chief source of resource of his domain to gratify his selfish wishes, and, after years of oppression, his subjects were up against him.

Others came on less important errands. The sovereign heard their several complaints and petitions of them as he saw fit. Finally, all departed save one.

The remaining caller was a small man of appearance unlike the rest. He was a Japanese, not a Tachotian.

"Most excellent King will see you in private," said Tubora Tumaida.

He stepped down from his throne, dismissed his retainers and retired to a smaller chamber which adjoined the throne-room.

The Japanese, thus addressed, followed. This man was none other than Count Maru, the great Nipponese strategist, delegated by the Mikado to close the deal for the secret annexation of Tachoto to the Japanese Empire, to be used, as Colonel Sigbee had outlined, as a base of attack against the Philippines.

Maru had dropped to his knees, knocked his head on the floor, and gone through all the ceremonials, through no sense of inferiority to Tubora Tumaida. His attitude of obeisance ended when he had entered the room with his majesty. There he became master, and the haughty Tubora Tumaida became the ... to the wishes and whims of Maru. ... sohoto, Tubora Tumaida had been King in name only.

"Are you ready to agree absolutely to ... terms?" this was the first question the Jap fired at the make-believe monarch.

"They are very harsh, does not your lordship think——" the ruler began

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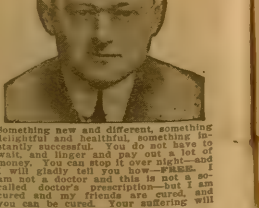

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apologetically, but the other interrupted.

"Harsh or not, there we my terms, and I will not alter them. Accept, well and good. Reject them, and bear the consequences—and you well know what they will be."

"But, sir," protested Tubora Tumaida, "to subscribe to your terms would mean my death. Already they suspect connivance, and are angered against me since you have come to the island."

"Fear no petty rebellions on the island. I will take care of that," said the Jap.

"But you have seen the ship in the harbor. You know what it means" the ruler demanded. "You know not the temper of my people, and their desire to become one of the Philippine group under the United States' rule. They have seen the prosperity of the Philippines and want to share it."

"The talk of the spirit of 'your people' is nonsense. You have no people. Must I remind you again that this island already is part of the Japanese Empire? These presumptuous Yankees have the Mikado to deal with in their high-handed work."

"But it appears that the United States, through its espionage service, has learned of the actions of Japan, taken in secret and without the agreement of the concert of nations. Plainly, this is a violation of international law—"

"International law, nothing!" the Jap exploded. "The Japanese know no international law. The will of the Mikado is supreme over any law. These Americans will be well taken care of. This man Sanders already is in prison. Another man, the head-hunter, is on the trail of the other two who left the boat this morning."

"But Hugi was to slay this Sanders," reminded Tubora Tumaida, and not without a show of sarcasm in his tone.

"He failed in this: failed, and permitted the white man to catch the mail boat and send off his documents telling of this whole transaction. And if it had not been for the vigilance of my royal guards, Sanders would have been at liberty yet. They, and not your head-hunters, captured him."

"That is all well and good," Maru admitted, "but the other two will not escape him. You know the ruse by which Hugi entraps his victims. He is a ventriloquist, a mimic of rare skill. He imitates the birds of the air, the beasts of the field. He imitates the voices of men and women. It is said that the two Americans left the boat in hot pursuit of a girl and another man, presumably their prisoners. How will he call through the jungle in the manner of an American woman, lure them to a favorable spot where he can pounce upon them and slay them both. I doubt if they are alive at this moment."

"I well know, Maru, your power, Maru," the island ruler sighed. "I have no alternative. I will come to your terms, however harsh and unjust they be. Have you the papers here?"

"I have," said the Jap producing a document, "and we can put our seals and the transaction will be closed."

Without another word Tubora Tumaida took the document, threw over to a desk and affixed his signature.

"There, the business is done," said Maru. "You have ceded away your last right of claim and succession by heir to Taohoto. You may rule here, ostensibly, for the time being, but the consideration of 250,000 francs, over and above your debt to the French bankers, which the Japanese government already has paid, you leave the island forever."

With that the Jap departed. The King, who had just signed away all right to his kingdom, fell into a brown study. He considered carefully the fate of the shipwrecked French seaman, who, a hundred years previous, had landed on the island and had married into the royal family, a princess in the reigning family of the island.

It was this strain of European blood that had dethroned him. It had brought upon him the curse of the white man's civilization, and robbed him of his kingdom—which, though but a tiny island, was as dear to his heart as the domains of the most powerful monarch on earth.

In the innermost recesses of his mind he had nurtured a scheme to seize upon Maru and Hugi, and when the Jap ship knew, would bring a Japanese army to the island, and he would suffer a similar fate. He could see no other way, so only pondered, not knowing which way to turn.

CHAPTER XXI.

MARJORIE'S FATE SEALED.

ON LEAVING the boat, Joe had led Marjorie swiftly through the tropical jungle. The instincts of the Indian seemed to return to him as he picked his way through the unknown forest with the dexterity of a native. In a little hillside in the cliffs they found a natural cave, hollowed out in a rock.

To elude temporary pursuit they secreted themselves there. Wright and Guthrie, while on their search, came so near that their voices were heard distinctly by the hidden ones.

Joe had made the voyage in the hold of the ship where the food was kept. He had bundled up hurriedly several good and thrown them in the boat when they escaped from the steamer.

Night came on, and the two were hungry. They had no water. Joe ventured out and soon returned with a canteen, filled from a nearby spring. That night Marjorie slept in the cave and Joe laid down outside the entrance, so that if any one came near he would be awakened.

For several days they lived thus, neither seeing nor hearing anything more of Guthrie or Wright. They planned to remain in this retreat until another ship appeared in the harbor. Then they intended to make a dash for the first boat that weighed anchor, and escape back to the United States. Joe was anxious for her time in the cave, coming out only at night to breathe the cool air. Joe was at her side constantly at night, and his daily trips to the spring for water.

But one day Marjorie thought Joe was gone no longer than usual for water. She waited another fifteen minutes impatiently, but still he did not return. Her fears began to get the better of her. In half an hour she was certain something had gone wrong. Not reckoning the danger to herself, she carefully inspected the automatic, and started out in search of her Indian protector. She did not know the location of the spring, but she started off through the trees in the general direction in which she always had seen Joe disappear. She had not gone far until she felt a hand with a grip of steel seize her arm. She started to cry out, but another swarthy palm was clapped over her mouth. Quickly she was disarmed and a rope passed around her body, binding her hands and feet fast.

Her captor was not Hugi, the head-hunter. He was a Taohotian. The native led her a little further through the jungle. There she saw Joe, likewise bound, and in the custody of two other South Sea Islanders.

The prisoners were marched toward the village. Main streets were avoided as they were taken direct to the palace of Tubora Tumaida. They were conducted into the vast throne-room, where the island ruler was seated in his robes of state.

"And so you have them at last?" said Tubora Tumaida, in his native tongue.

"Yea, oh, most high and mighty ruler," responded the leader of Marjorie's and Joe's captors, bowing to the floor.

"Well done, oh, good and faithful servants," the King replied. "You shall be justly rewarded for this. Lead them away to prison."

The King and Taohoto seemed his old self once again. If during the past few months he had seen himself losing face, he had tried and essayed to placate them by being milder in his demands, he had grown stern again. He ruled as he had for five years to rule, and he meant to make the most of them. He was as the Bourbon ruler of France who "learned and forgot nothing."

He had levied a new tax upon all the island, already impoverished by the demands of the monarch. He had ordered those who would not pay to be executed with the axe. He had ordered all the chiefs to appear at the royal palace for a great feast and banquet. He charged each with him. In addition to the tax treasures collected in his district, one beautiful maiden who was to be added to the monarch's harem. This would not be a hard matter, as it was considered the greatest honor that could befall a native girl to be chosen as a wife of the King.

Tubora Tumaida stretched his legs beneath a table laden with a sumptuous meal one evening, and called for more wine. As a matter of fact, his majesty was already drunk. He was intoxicated most of the time, and firmly resolved to remain in that happy state so long as the gold lasted in the land. Liquor chased away his troubles.

The date for the great feast was but a few days off. Wine clouded the brain of the monarch to thoughts of pleasant things. He recalled the grace of face and figure of Marjorie, the white native brought before him. It would be a nice thing, he reasoned, to have her in his harem, for he knew she would mean immediate rebellion. The wives of the King must come from the island. Tubora Tumaida drank more wine and strove for a way around the difficulty.

A great clamor from outside interrupted his reflections. Voices were intermingled with a noise not unlike the rumble of thunder, yet strangely similar to the discharging of volleys of great guns.

The King staggered to a window and looked out. His complexion was turned red. Flames darted from the crest of Mount Pepito, which reared its majestic head above the village. The people of the village were running wildly about in the streets. They were falling on their knees prone upon the ground, offering up all sorts of supplications to their strange gods to deliver them from destruction.

The Taohotians were superstitious. One of their beliefs was that the gods of the island lived with the spirits of their ancient kings and heroes in war, dwelt in the crater of Pepito, an active volcano that had not been in eruption for a hundred years. It was the belief on the island that an eruption of the volcano meant the displeasure of the gods with the people on the island.

The natives came fleeing by the hundred to the palace of Tubora Tumaida. They scaled the high walls which surrounded the royal grounds and ran, with terror-stricken faces, toward the royal palace. Fear gripped the heart of Tubora Tumaida as he felt sure misgivings of native superstition regarding the mysterious behavior of the volcano. Were they to be spared calamities; that was for the ignorant natives, he told himself.

Tubora Tumaida feared, because he took this demonstration on the part of the natives as an unfriendly one directed at himself. To save his people, long oppressed, risen against him, coming to sack his palace and tear him limb from limb.

He stepped out onto the broad portico of the palace to await their coming. The surging throng stopped short at the palace steps. Each one fell down upon his face before the King and pleaded for forgiveness. It developed that the poor natives had taken the eruption of Mount Pepito as a warning that unless they mended their ways and became more respectful to their King, his ancestors, who dwelt in the mountain, would visit upon them a terrible punishment.

The crafty Tubora Tumaida was equal to the occasion. He raised his hand for

(Continued on page seventeen.)

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America's Secret War.

(Continued from page fifteen.)

silence and made a long speech. He said it was true that his ancestors and the gods of the island had signified the intention of punishing his unworthy subjects for their derelictions and con-

"... but I am a great believer," the monarch went on; "I will forgive you and choose the gods, who look to me for service, to support punishment. What can be done only under one considera-... The spirit of Queen Ochitree, who ruled this island long ago, is going to come in the flesh and dwell in my house. When the chiefs assemble, the high priest will read a wedding service. This will be symbolic of a union between the rulers of old and my reign. It will mean that further lack of obedience of my royal commands and wishes will be punished by death.

"Go, now, to your own homes and give thanks that you have such a merciful king. Return with presents such as will please the White Queen, the reincarnated spirit of Queen Ochitree, who is coming back to life to watch over her people."

The natives crowded around to kiss the hem of Tubora Tumaida's garments. They made great outpourings of their thanks for his mercy. Then they went to their homes and throughout the night there was a steady procession through the palace gate of natives bearing gold, ivory, rosary corals, rugs and silk as offerings to the White Queen.

The mysterious demonstration on the mountain had ceased. Tubora Tumaida returned to his chamber.

"Aha," he laughed to himself, "if there are any gods on this old mountain there, they certainly favored me today. I have made it possible to make the white girl my bride."

Thus Marjorie's fate was sealed. Tubora Tumaida laughed wickedly and rolled for his bed.

This interesting story will be concluded in the next issue of the Ledger. During the coming month many good stories will appear in these columns. If you are not already a subscriber for this paper, it will repay you to send in a year's subscription. It costs you only $1.00, and you will never regret it. Let us hear from you at once.

* * *

Her Grate Fire.

"Don't you adore a grate fire?" Lydia drew up her chair before the grate and prepared herself for the confidences that such a position inspired. The grate was ...

"... replied Myra, "but I think they are dangerous."

"Because ... the sparks?" innocently inquired Lydia.

"Oh, no! I say if you use the word 'grate' in the old-fashioned sense."

"Gracious!" exclaimed Lydia. "I had no such thought. But why should they be dangerous in that way?"

"Simply," explained Myra, "because a grate fire is so conducive to sentimental dreamings that I never knew a man and a woman to sit down before one but straightway they would fall to romancing; and if they were young and unmarried ten to one they would be persuaded by the subtle and persuasive influence of the fire, to exchange vows, or to do something equally foolish."

"How absurd!" cried Lydia. "Did you ever happen to know of such a ..."

"Indeed I did," replied Myra. "I was thinking of Irene Leighton and Clive Wheaton when I spoke. Of course they were both of a sensitive nature, and they were a bit smitten with each other before he made his first call, but at the ... time I don't believe he would ever ... proposed to Irene if she had not ... him before a beautiful grate fire ... that first evening."

"Dear me!" Lydia drew nearer to the dangerous flames. "Do you mean to say that he fell in the fire, speaking metaphorically, the minute he sat down?"

"Oh, I don't suppose he proposed instantaneously after taking his seat, but he is excessively literary, and he began by recalling various scenes in his favorite novels ... Irene ... and talked their subjects over before ... and then he asked Irene whether she had ever read the 'Traveller of Bachelor.'"

"And she?" breathlessly demanded Lydia.

"So, she hadn't," ... Myra. "So he told her all about the book and how the hero of it was a lonely old bachelor who was accustomed to sit before his solitary fire and console himself for the lack of a real companion by the grand creature created out of his fancies and out of the ashes. Then, of course, Clive went on to talk about his own grate experience and to tell how he had not even a fire for companionship, but that he had a picture of a happy newly wedded pair sitting before a fire and planning their future together. This was the poor things substitute both for a fire and a wife."

"And of course Irene couldn't resist remarks so touching and original," put in Lydia.

"She couldn't! When he went home that evening she had demanded a point on which side of their living-room they would have the grate and whether they would burn coal or wood."

"That was lovely," sighed Lydia. "But don't you dare tell me that the cold stare of day or the sight of the ashes in the grate caused her to repeat the good ..."

"Well, if she remembered it ... admitted the fact," declared Myra. "For Irene ... all her sentimentality, is real ... and she and Clive had sat down ... in front of ... and Clive had sat down ... as on that first evening. ... she'll never have been invited to act as bridesmaid next month."

"But I think I was his knowledge of literature that fanned the flame of her ..." mused Lydia, as she mechanically took up the poker and began to stir the fire. "It's unusual ... for a man to ... a woman who knows ... about books ... and ... Send a single ... who can ... conversation ... a fire, so I'm not surprised that Irene ... Seriously, Myra, I ... before her fire and begun to talk about insurance or real estate I am sure they ... and ... not have ... and she would ... if he had followed up such a conversation with a proposal."

"Perhaps not," admitted Myra. "But I do believe that it was the fire that did it."

"What kind of dress did Irene have on that evening?" demanded Lydia. "You know that costume has a great deal to do with such affairs, and she is one of the kind of gown that lends itself to 'twilight and ...' ... not enough to ... blaze ... that her ... should be illumined by the fitful flame," as the novelists put it; why, I can easily understand Clive's quick surrender."

"I don't know anything about those ... things," ... "I only know that the fire was the matchmaker."

"Well," declared Lydia, "I am going to ask father to have our grate changed to a real log-burning love-persuading fireplace and then be careful who sits before it."

* * *

Safety First?

Harriet.—"I suppose if I kissed you, you'd never speak to me again."

Harriet—"Why do you always look on the dark side of things?"

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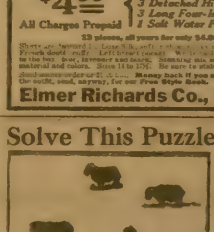

Here are seven sheep in a pen. By drawing three straight ... you can put each one in a pen by himself. If you can do it, we will send you as a prize, a piece of fine beautifully embossed parchment, ... suitable for framing, and also a certificate of entry in our grand contest for a $395 Saxon Automobile. All you have to do is to enclose two pennies in your letter to pay postage, and your ... mailing.

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Chicago Ledger

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COPIES WEEKLY.

GENTLE JABS

A good cook is the best household jewel.

Many trains of thought carry no freight.

A good conversationalist lets up occasionally.

The key to success is seldom used as a night key.

Imagination is the mother of most of our troubles.

It's as easy to begin loafing as it is hard to stop.

Many a dollar has been coined out of determination.

It's so much easier to pay compliments than bills.

Man's mission in life is to pay for what woman wants.

The most difficult part of drinking songs is the refrain.

There are few things more uncertain than life's certainties.

Always try to get a front view of a scene with a mule in it.

Some men are good because they find it cheaper than being bad.

Worry kills more people than work, because more go up against it.

How a woman does enjoy quarreling with a man who isn't quarrelsome.

Women are ever the same. Eve shared the apple with Adam, but took the first bite.

There's no such word as failure in connection with the forbidden fruit crop.

A woman who marries a man to reform him doesn't find life so monotonous.

Once in about 7,000 years a man manages to hit the mark when he shoots off his mouth.

A poor author is like a cheap printing press; he wastes a lot of ink, but never succeeds in making a good impression.

A man is lucky in one respect when he gets married. He isn't one of the bunch who must purchase the wedding presents.

A thin man is in difficulties for life, but a thin woman can join the buy-a-bale movement and reconstruct her figure to order.

When a woman is angry she tells a person just what she thinks of him—and, incidentally, just what she thinks other people think of him.

And it sometimes happens that women who display good judgment at bargain sales get the worst of it when it comes to selecting husbands.

Almost any man may work himself up to a high degree of popularity with his neighbors by taking up his residence on an uninhabited island in midocean.

Fashion Notes.

The smart, jaunty hat is worn tilted to one side, atop of the elaborately piled and curled coiffure.

The Japanese note in fashions makes possible the use of Japanese and Chinese embroideries, especially in blues. They will be charming with black, white and neutral shades.

Many of the shops are showing a line of gowns made on the kimono lines, which range at low prices. The kimonos are made of Japanese cotton crepe and come in pink, rose, pale blue, and lavender. The upper parts are embroidered in white in large sprawling rose and wisteria vines, and, although the embroidery is done by machine, it is a very good imitation of hand embroidery, and is exceedingly effective. The crepe has wonderful laundering possibilities, as even the palest shades hold their color.

A notable revival in the way of dress accessories are the many new ruchings for the neck and sleeves. These are made in crepe de chine, mousseline de soie, chiffon, liberty, French mull and all kinds of fancy nets. They come in the narrow widths for collars, and will take the place, to a certain extent, of the turn-over collars which have been worn so long. Ruchings of dress trimmings are in all kinds of elaborate designs, and a number of them are offered for underskeeves, berthas, et cetera.

The heavy coatings that bid to hold a prominent place during the winter and when spending a time at a Southern resort or in the country. Dress stuffs are only a trifle less important, and at first one might get the impression that white had been excluded in the dress-goods plan. This is by no means so, and almost any weave that is found in color is also to be had in plain white. There is this to be said, however, that for evening and dance gown, unless one is in mourning, has a liberal touch of color introduced in the way of trimming.

Recipes.

APPLE MERINGUE—Slice any kind of a stale cake; put the slices in a baking dish; pour a little sweet cream over the core four or five apples; cover the cake with the sliced apples; sprinkle cinnamon on a little grated nutmeg, and add one cup of granulated sugar; put the dish in a quick oven and when the apples are tender make a meringue by beating the whites to a stiff froth; to each white add one tablespoonful of powdered sugar, using a few drops of lemon to whiten the acidity of apple; heap lightly over the pudding and brown slightly in a quick oven; serve with cream sauce.

CHEESE AND NUT SANDWICHES—Chop pecan, hickory, or English walnuts small; mix and work into an equal bulk of cream or neufchatel cheese, add a dash of paprika, and use in spreading bread prepared for the sandwiches. Lettuce, leaf of lettuce, dipped in French dressing, may be placed between the two pieces of bread.

CHERRY AND ALMOND SALAD—Drain Maraschino cherries free from liquor; make incision in the side of each cherry; insert an almond; place cherries carefully in lettuce cups. Mix one cupful of olive oil, one-fourth teaspoonful of paprika, juice of quarter lemon; put on ice until congealed, then dress salad.

BALTIMORE RELISH—Two cups finely chopped cabbage, one red pepper, finely chopped, one and one-half teaspoons celery salt, two tablespoons sugar, one-half teaspoon salt, one-half teaspoon mustard, one-fourth cup vinegar. Mix celery salt, sugar and mustard and pour on slowly the vinegar, a little at a time; change and then add first mixture. Very nice.

For the Housewife.

Tar may be removed from the hands by rubbing with the outside of fresh orange or lemon peel and drying immediately. The volatile oils dissolve tar so that it can be rubbed off.

To clean wood-work steep tea grounds in a tin pail or pan for half an hour. Strain through sieve and use the tea to wash all varnished paint. Soap should not be used on the unvarnished paint.

To clean white enameled furniture remove all dirty marks with a flannel dipped in methylated spirit. Then wash at once with tepid water to which has been added a little fine oatmeal. Never use soap or soda.

Chamois leather can be successfully cleaned at home. Place the soiled piece in a strong suds of some good soap. Soak for an hour and rub it until clear. Finally rinse the leather in warm soap water. Wring the leather in a linen cloth and dry quickly. If the chamois dries stiff and harsh, rub gently until soft.

Many housekeepers are annoyed to find their silver tarnished, although they have carefully polished it before putting it away. Try putting in the silver chest or drawer a generous sized piece of camphor, and you will be delighted to find your "best" silver always ready for immediate use, if it was free from tarnish when put away.

Health Notes.

Without good teeth there cannot be proper chewing; without proper chewing there cannot be proper digestion; without proper digestion there cannot be proper nourishment; without proper nourishment there cannot be good health. Without health, what is life?

The old German saying, "An apple a day keeps the doctor away," holds good of that toothsome fruit. Baked or raw, there is no article of diet so nutritious and as a cleaner of the system in winter time, when one is forced to eat heavy and starchy foods for health's sake, it is excellent.

Brushing the teeth is not enough for their good health. Let the mouth be purified for its rest by rinsing it with a cleansing mouth bath. Else some good sterilizing agents, such as camphor, hydrogen peroxide, the proportion being a few drops to a glassful of warm water. Then rub the gums with milk of magnesia, allowing it to permeate every corner of the mouth and all the crevices between the teeth.

The Ways of Married People.

More than half the troubles of married people are the result of a want of tact. An observing person soon learns to know the ways and whims of each other, and, by tact, avoid the rocks which for ages have destroyed the happiness of married life. For instance, a sensible wife soon discovers that her husband does not like to be told how careful he is everything he does. Nine times out of ten he does not know what they are himself.

A sensible wife will not try to ape her rich neighbors, nor nag her husband for the money he cannot afford to give her. Then will she have that independence to accept her life as she finds it, and makes the most of it.

No wife should expect her most brilliant expectations of happiness. She will never be quite so happy as she expected to be. Can be more happy than ever that. She will take the goods the gods provide, and be thankful.

The average man expects a good deal of his wife. He wants her to stay at home when he is out. He doesn't know why, neither does she, but it is so. He wants her to be there when he comes home. It does not seem right if she is not.

A tactful woman will not stand on her dignity with her husband, for it doesn't pay. The average husband has many peculiarities and foibles which are wholly incomprehensible to women. Do not try to understand them, for you cannot, and that is all there is to it.

If you are going to be married, make up your mind that you will be patient through the first two or three years, while you are getting used to each other. This is the crucial period in married life, and if it passes safely all is generally fairly plain sailing afterward.

Have You Anaemia?

Then eat:
Limes.
Lentils.
Spinach.
Black currants.
Damsons, apples, all fruits and vegetables containing iron. Anaemia is more frequently the result of a badly chosen dietary than most people imagine and can be averted, even cured, by eating proper food. One of the most recommended articles of diet for anaemic women is bone marrow. The contents of one bone marrow, boiled or cooked with cream pudding and served on toast, is said to be an ideal blood-making food.

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Madame Mignette's Beauty Cream and Skin Whitener removes every blemish, sunburn, freckle, tan or wrinkle, leaving the skin soft, clear and smooth. It is perfectly harmless and contains no grease. Closes the pores and brings back the youthful glow to the cheeks. Sent to any address, postpaid, for 50c. In this condition until extreme old age. This preparation has been in use by the fair sex of France for some time and is now introduced in America. Send for circular which you can have filled at any drug store at a very small cost. Do not delay, but write at once. Box 691, Blairsville, Pa.

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Save Half

Every garment we make to your measure. Regular $20 suits to order, $15.98. Regular $25 suits to order, $17.98. Regular $30 suits to order, $19.98. Regular $35 suits to order, $21.98. Regular $40 suits to order, $23.98. Regular $45 suits to order, $25.98. Regular $50 suits to order, $27.98. Regular $60 suits to order, $29.98. Regular $75 suits to order, $31.98. Regular $100 suits to order, $33.98. Regular $125 suits to order, $35.98. Regular $150 suits to order, $37.98. Regular $200 suits to order, $39.98.

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Ted of the Hills

Or, Fighting Cattle Thieves

By Annie Brownlee Quimby

Ted's rifle went to his shoulder.

[Copyright 1915 by W. D. Boyce Co.]

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CHAPTER VII.

THE following morning Ted was early on his way to the range near the timber, but early as it was Pete was there before him. After riding up and down for half an hour, he dismounted and began examining the cattle tracks on the banks of Bear Creek. Pete had Indian blood in his veins, and was an expert trailer and cattle man. Where a number of hoof marks led to the water's edge, he stooped low with nose close to the ground, his leathery face alert and eager, and his appearance betokening keen excitement. The Indian nature was uppermost now.

"What is it, Pete?" Ted asked, for he could see nothing but a confusion of hoof tracks.

"Um!" still studying the tracks. "Four steers are gone, sure 'nough. A small man, with the heel of his right boot partly gone, took your cattle, and he rides a big brown horse."

"But how do you know he was a small man and what kind of a horse he rode?" Ted asked incredulously.

"Big man have big foot, and sink in the sand; small man have small foot, and not sink much," pointing to a faint footprint beside the cattle tracks.

"That's good reasoning, Pete. Would you mind telling me how you know what kind of a horse he rode?"

"I know he is a big horse because the heel is big, and he sinks deep in the sand."

"But how do you know his color?"

For answer Pete turned to a bunch of saplings and loosened a dozen long brown hairs, evidently torn from a horse's mane.

"A small man with part of his right heel gone, left his horse here while he got a drink from the creek. The horse's neck itched, and he rubbed the sapling. See?"

"Yes, I see, but I never would have seen if you hadn't showed me." Ted said admiringly. "You're a wise old geeser, Pete!"

"I know one or two things, boy. It is thirty-four years since I first struck the trail," he replied, with a certain pride of occupation.

"But surely there was more than one man?"

"Yes, I think there were two, but I've only found one yet. We'll see."

Pete followed the creek for several hundred yards, then circled out into the range and, a half hour later, joined Ted.

"There was three of 'em, but I don't know nothin' about the others, 'cept that they rode small ponies without shoes. Them hosses belong to the hills, sure, else they'd be shod."

"It's good-by to them steers, sure," Ted said, hope dying hard.

"Huh!" Pete grunted. "We'll find 'em. We'll sure find 'em. I'm goin' to follow the little man and the big horse. They went back into the hills, I 'spect."

"Didn't they all keep together?"

"Naw. The big horse went up toward Ghost Gulch with part of the herd. Looks like t'other two went round behind Lonesome. I'll trail 'em and find where they've gone."

Pete dismounted and carefully tightened up his saddle girth, then examined his pistols and returned them to their holsters. Springing lightly to the saddle, he waved Ted a good-by, and started off at a brisk trot toward Ghost Gulch.

Ted stood and watched the horse and rider until they disappeared between the two hills.

"Gol darn it! I feel like an infant in swaddling clothes. Here I am standing like a mummy, while he goes after them steers. If I had an ounce of brains I'd know what to do, but I don't. I wish I'd brought Captain, he's always company."

Casting his eyes over the range, he glanced toward Lonesome Ridge, and could just make out Silver's cabin away up among the pines. Then he caught a glimpse of a dark object moving downward along the trail toward Lonesome Gulch. Where the trail crossed a clear space, he recognized the white hair and beard of the old hermit, who was mounted upon his black pony.

"It's Silver coming down the trail. I wonder if he has found out anything about the steers?" he murmured, half aloud. "I guess I'll go and meet him," turning into the winding path that led across Lonesome Gulch.

"I was just coming down to see you, boy," Silver called, drawing rein close to Ted. "Have you learned anything about the steers?"

"No, but Pete thinks he can find them. He is following their trail over toward Ghost Gulch."

"I saw a horse and rider going in that direction."

"If any one can trail them, Pete can," Ted went on. "He is part Indian, you know, and he knows every inch of these hills, and can read the signs like a grammar school kid does his copy book."

"You're right, boy. He knows the hills and valleys, and ravines, that's a fact. Nature is an open book to him, but he hasn't a fair chance this time."

"Why, I'm mighty glad I'm tough, and I've a feeling that he'll bring them steers home."

But the old man shook his head.

"I doubt it, son. I doubt it," he said. Then, suddenly brightening, he went on, "Did you tell the little mother of your loss, boy?"

Ted thought his tone was a little anxious.

"Yes, I didn't intend to, at first, but she guessed that something was wrong, and I had to tell her. You see, she had worked so hard and planned so long, what we would do with the money those steers would bring, that I was almost afraid to tell her."

"Yes, yes! But what did she say, boy?" he broke in impatiently, his voice strangely hoarse, and his face averted.

"Why, she said not to worry, I might have known she would say: 'If any one needed them worse than we did, they were welcome to them,' or something very like that."

A queer sound came from the old man's throat; it was not a sob nor a chuckle, but sounded very like both.

"That mother of yours must be a plucky little woman, boy. I believe I can see her," and he shut his eyes. "She has a kind, true face, and the expression is sweet and womanly. Her eyes are blue and very expressive, the hair a few shades darker than yours, and sort of fluffy-like, and maybe streaked a little with gray, and knotted low at the back of her neck. She is not what you'd call a pretty woman, but a woman that's good to look at, a woman that would make you forget your troubles, and feel—

(Continued on page twenty-one.)

How to Play the Piano or Organ in One Hour.

A Detroit musician has invented a new method by which any little child or grown person can learn to play in one hour in their own home. Three sheets will be sent absolutely free to any person who will be sent absolutely free to any person who will be sent absolutely free to any person who

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WE GIVE YOU ANY OF THESE FINE PREMIUMS

For Selling a Few of Our 7-Bar Boxes of Assorted Toilet Soaps

We want every one to take advantage of this offer because it is big value and is so very easy to do. You can easily sell 20 to 30 of these big special boxes of assorted soap, shown below. It is a regular 75 cent value, yet it sells for only 50 cents. To sell enough to earn a fine premium will take you only an hour or so. Pick out the premium you want and send us the coupon properly filled in with amount, name, number of article, etc.

This big box of assorted soap is many times the size of the picture. It contains 7 bars of our very best Toilet Soaps; Diamond Glycerine, Wild Rose, Fragrant Bouquet, Palm Cocoa, Carnation, Lavender Complexion, and Pumice. All full size, highest quality. Any one can sell Crofts & Reed's fine soap. Boys and girls can easily earn a premium by selling after school. Friends and neighbors will be glad to buy because it is such good value. Remember, you need only sell 20 boxes to earn our No. 90254 Rocker, or 30 boxes to secure our No. 90263 Rocker, or 28 boxes to secure our 48-piece Dinner Set, No. 160132, or 25 boxes to earn a handsome set of Aluminum Cooking Ware, No. 24080, or 20 boxes to earn a beautiful Bed, No. 10277. Girls can easily earn beautiful Wrist Watch, No. 41073, by selling 30 boxes, or Boys need sell only 30 boxes to secure the Farm Wagon, No. 3894.

SELL 20 BOXES

No. 90254

Given for Selling 20 Boxes of our 7-Bar Assorted Toilet Soap. This comfortable Ladies' rocker is made of solid oak throughout in the popular Mission Type. It is well made and durable, has back are four broad, straight, flat spindles, and two square spindles support each one of the neatly shaped arms. The frame of this Rocker is very sturdy, being well braced. Seat is roomy and full saddle shaped. If you want this Rocker fill out the coupon, giving number, amount of Soap, references, etc. Rocker and Soap will be shipped at once. Furnished in Golden Oak or Fumed Oak Finish.

WE SHIP SOAP AND PREMIUM ON CREDIT

Give You 30 Days to Pay

We will send you the soap and premium you pick out, all on 30 days' credit. Don't send any money with your order unless you prefer to do so. Just fill out the coupon, writing your name and address carefully, and giving us as two references the names of your pastor, doctor, banker or freight agent. We will at once send you your premium and the soap you are to sell. You can pay us when the soap is sold. We allow 30 days in which to dispose of soap. It should take only a day or so.

Remember, you cannot possibly lose, and you run no risk, because we agree to take everything back at our expense if you are not perfectly satisfied with everything. Think of getting a fine premium on these terms. No deposit, no risk. There is nothing to do but sell 20 to 30 quick-selling, money-making soap that everybody wants the minute they see it. We wish you could see these fine premiums—we know you would be delighted with them. Never mind, if premium you want—fill out the coupon carefully and mail today.

Sell 30 Boxes of Soap, Earn This 48 Piece Dinner Set

No. 160132

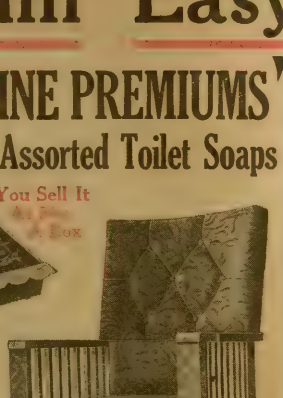
48-Piece Dinner Set, No. 160132—given for selling 30 boxes of 7-Bar Toilet Soap. Decoration is a pretty old rose pattern, green foliage harmonizes with the pink coloring in the roses, outer edge of each dish traced with broken gold lines, set consists of six 9-inch Dinner Plates, six 8-inch Luncheon Plates, six 7½-inch Pie or Bread and Butter Plates, six Cups and six Saucers, six 6-inch Sauce Dishes, six Individual Butters, one deep 7¼-inch Open Vegetable or Salad Dish, one 8-inch Covered Vegetable Dish, one 11-inch Platter, one Creamer and 1 open Sugar Bowl. This set is sufficient to lay a table for six people.

Sell 25 Boxes of Soap, Earn This Fine Aluminum Cooking Set

No. 24080

Given for selling only 25 Boxes of our 7-Bar Toilet Soap. This set consists of one Dripping or Roasting Pan, size 14x9½x3; one 6-quart Preserving Kettle; one 4-quart Saucepan; one 2-quart Saucepan; one ½-quart Saucepan, one 4-quart Berlin Covered Kettle. This set is made entirely of pure aluminum, by one of the best manufacturers of aluminum ware in the country. Sell the soap—send us $12.50, and keep this handsome Cooking Outfit for your trouble.

You Sell It At 50c a Box



Rocker No. 90263

Sell Only 30 Boxes of Soap, Earn This Fine Rocker

Notice the wide, comfortable and thickly upholstered high curved back of this beautiful Rocker. Frame is of Solid Oak, Rich Golden Oak finish; front posts and arms 4 inches wide; eight ¾-inch fillers under each arm; the seat is of spring construction and measures 21x20 inches; back, 19 inches high from seat. Upholstered in fine grade of imitation Spanish Leather which harmonizes perfectly with the Golden Oak finish. Back tufted in neat design. Why pay cash for a Rocker like this, when by selling our Soap you can earn it with a few hours' work? Fill out the coupon; sell the 30 Boxes of Soap, send us $15.00, and keep this handsome piece of furniture as your reward.

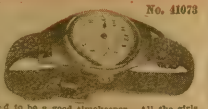
Sell 30 Boxes Earn This Bed

No. 10277

Given for selling 30 Boxes of 7-Bar Toilet Soap. Furnished in your choice of Vernis Martin or White Enamel; large Scroll continuous posts, in one solid piece, no knobs or joints where dirt or dust can collect; filler rods, 1 inch in diameter; height of head, 55 inches; height of foot, 35 inches; furnished in 4-ft. and 4-ft. 6-in. sizes. State size desired when ordering.

GIRLS! EARN THIS WRIST WATCH

No. 41073



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Ted of the Hills.

(Continued from page nineteen.)

at peace with the world." He opened his eyes, and looked at the boy smilingly.

"Where did you see mother?" Ted asked, curiously. "I couldn't describe her that well, myself."

"I have seen your mother constantly through you, boy. You don't realize it, perhaps, but you have told me so many little details about your mother that I should know her if I met her," and the old face wrinkled into a kindly smile.

"You must let me take you to see mother some time, Silver. You'd like her, I know, and you would have so many interesting things to talk about. She likes Tennyson and Wordsworth, and she reads Swinburne, too."

"No, boy. I can't do that!" he cried in quick alarm, which made Ted smile. "I have held no social converse with a woman for years. I couldn't now." The hand that clutched the bridle rein trembled visibly.

"Oh, all right. I didn't mean to frighten you, but I know you'd enjoy talking to mother. She is so sensible and intelligent, and has read so much," Ted said proudly; but the old man shook his head.

"She is not the new woman type, is she, boy?" the old man asked smiling.

"No, mother is not a suffragette. She believes politics and governmental control should belong to the men. Mother is a home woman," the boy said, proudly. "And do you know, Silver, when God created Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, I believe he intended Eve to be just such a woman as mother, and only for that apple business she would have been, I suppose. Then we'd 'a' had no militant females. It seems to me them progressive females have read so much about are not satisfied with the petticoats, but they want the pants too."

Silver's white head and beard shook with laughter as he petted Topsy's glossy neck.

"Why, boy, that's a new side to you. I wasn't aware that you gave such questions a thought."

"I don't generally; but I have just got to, sometimes," he answered naively.

"Well, well!" Silver said, apparently studying some knotty problem. "But to return to our subject, aren't these hills a strange place for an educated lady like your mother to live? She must be lonely here?"

"It's a strange place for an educated gentleman like yourself, Silver," Ted answered. "Mother is never lonely. She doesn't have time, I guess."

"Aye, boy, it's a strange place, indeed. But life went wrong with me, and I'm glad of the peace of these rugged hills. When I lost all that made life dear to me, I left the world and came up into the old hills, near to the heart of Nature, and here I have learned to be almost happy again." The old voice quavered. "Here, among the hills that I have grown to love, the light of my life will go out, and my soul will journey on to another world, and perhaps I may be privileged to carry with me a dream-like recollection of these dear old hills and valleys that I have grown to love, as I brought with me to this life a vague, uncertain vision of a world that has been, but is not."

"I don't know what you mean, Silver, but mother would understand," the boy answered.

With an effort, the old man threw off the mood.

"Have you anything particular to do this afternoon?" he asked.

"I thought of having a look through the timber for quail. There is no use trying to find those steers, for I don't know the trails well enough. I might do more harm than good."

"You're right, boy. It's a man-sized job tracking down those cattle thieves, and you've got to know their methods. How would you like to get a nice buck this afternoon? I know where to find one, I think."

"Just the thing!" the boy cried eagerly.

CHAPTER VIII.

AFTER a hasty cup of coffee and a light lunch at the hermit's cabin, Ted and his strange companion took the trail that led over the ridge and down the other side of Lonesome to a thickly wooded gulch through which ran a silver stream of water, which had its source farther up in the hills. This gulch was the natural home of wild animals, but, owing to its remoteness, it was seldom visited by hunters, and for miles on the other side of Lonesome there was no human habitation.

"We had better leave the ponies here," the old man said. "If afoot, we can steal up quite close to them, perhaps."

At the brook Silver and Ted dismounted, and Ted tied a small sapling, while Silver tied his little black mare further down the stream.

Creeping stealthily through the bushes for a hundred yards, they came suddenly upon an open glade, through which the silver stream flowed, and on either side of which the grass grew tall and luxuriant. The old man led the way, and creeping noiselessly to the shelter of a huge bowlder, peered into the glade below. He drew in his breath with a quick gasp, and beckoned silently to Ted to join him. Ted gained the shelter of the bowlder, then peered curiously into the glade.

In the beautiful little glade, feeding quietly by the miniature river, was a big doe with a half-grown fawn by her side, while nearby was a giant buck, his huge antlers towering in the air, and his nose up. The wind was blowing toward the glade, and he was scenting them, and began to show signs of uneasiness. Ted's rifle was at his shoulder, but Silver laid a hand on his arm.

"Wait, boy, take a look at the other end of the glade," he whispered, and the direction of the old man's finger, and held his breath in amazement.

Feeding at the other end of the glade were seven mares, and a big chestnut stallion with a cream mane and tail. Ted looked at Silver, and the old man nodded. "They are the horses you told me about once?" the boy whispered.

Silver nodded. "There seem to be more of them now than there were the last time I saw them, though."

"Isn't that chestnut a beauty? What a neck and shoulder he has!" the boy cried in excited admiration. "I'd give a good deal to capture him."

"Hush! He gets the scents either us or Topsy. Watch him, now."

The big chestnut had his nose in the air, sniffing suspiciously. Then he whinnied shrilly, and, throwing his nimble heels in the air, he circled the bunch of mares, who had drawn together at the first alarm, and were following their leader. The big fellow paused for a minute by the side of the others, his head held high, and nostrils wide and quivering. Then he gave a long shrill whistle—it could scarcely be called a whinny—and it was immediately answered from the woods behind the two silent spectators. Then he circled wildly, and, tossing his little heels in whinny, threw his heels out for pure joy, and started up the hill toward the spot where Topsy stood.

"Doggone him!" the old man cried. "He'll steal Topsy if he can. You'd better take a shot at that buck while I go and get Topsy."

Just then there was a shrill neigh and the sound of crackling brush behind them, and Topsy, whinnying gleefully, came trotting down to meet the big chestnut.

"Doggone him!" the old man cried. "He's got her, sure." But his voice was lost in the report of Ted's rifle. The big buck thrashed the ground for a minute, then lay still.

"That was a good shot, boy, but I wish it had been aimed at that thieving stallion. He has got Topsy now, and I'll never be able to get her again. She'll go with the band."

"I'll try and head her off. We may be able to separate them, and get her."

But Silver shook his head.

"That big fellow will see that you don't do that. They say he has the cunning of Satan. He understands his business, the old pirate!"

Ted hurried to the spot where Dan was tied, and, quickly mounting, made a detour of the hill, hoping to get between the chestnut and Topsy and drive her down the glade toward Silver.

The big stallion was standing by Topsy's side, rubbing his nose against her glossy black neck, when he noticed Ted coming toward them. Ted's heart swelled with admiration for the noble beast. His huge form towered high above Topsy, standing where the sun fell full upon his smooth, glossy coat, every curve of his body was grace; with the long mane blowing in the breeze, he made a beautiful picture. The cream-colored mane fell halfway to the ground, and the sun shimmered on it, making it look like threads of silk, while the tail, thick and of the same rich color, reached almost to the ground. When he saw Ted coming he threw up his head and tossed his long silky mane to the breeze, while his eyes seemed to divine his purpose in them. Whinnying softly in Topsy's ear, he trotted off across the glade, turning now and again to see if she were following him. The rest of the band had gathered on the side of the hill, and were watching their leader. Ted decided to rush Topsy and by so doing separate her from her thieving companion, but the big fellow seemed to divine his purpose and kept between them. Once Ted thought he would make a dash, but the big chestnut's heels cut the air so close to Dan's head that he decided to give it up. "If I only had a rope," he thought, "I'd show him a trick or two."

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"Hey, Ted!" Silver called, "give it up; he might rush you."

Ted wheeled to one side and watched the big fellow trot slowly up the hill with Topsy following close behind without once glancing back. Then Ted joined Silver.

"That's the finest horse I ever saw," Ted cried delightedly. "Such limbs, and such a well set head! He's as nimble and light-footed as a colt, and not an awkward move about him."

"And he has stolen my Topsy," the old man said, almost childishly. "I wouldn't mind if I knew where I could get another quiet beast. The next one won't be a mare though," he said decisively. "That's the female of the species for you, boy. No matter how kindly you treat them, when the right fellow comes along they'll desert you without even saying good-by."

"Never mind, Silver," Ted laughed. "We'll have Topsy back in a day or two. I'm going to capture that chestnut. I just got to have him, that's all. Gee! Isn't he a beauty?"

"He is that all right, boy. But how are you going to get him? He'll fight if you corner him."

"I don't know how I'll do it, but I'll do it somehow," he said positively. "If I'd had a rope I'd 'a' got him now and roped him to a sapling. I'll come back in the morning. They won't go far tonight. Say, Silver, don't you think they are a mighty tame bunch of wild horses?" Ted asked.

"They are not really wild horses, boy. I have heard that the big chestnut was washed ashore from a coast steamer that went on the rocks in a fog off Point Arena, and then wandered into the hills here. He's a regular outlaw, too, for he makes a business of increasing his followers by illegal methods. You saw how he took Topsy from us? Several times different people have sought to capture him, but he has proved too cunning for that. I dare say every mare in that bunch has been enticed away from her rightful owner by that old rebel."

"He is a horse with a history," Ted laughed. "I'd love to have a saddle on him. He's a royal old fellow, if he is a pirate."

"You'll never get a saddle on him; he is too shrewd for that. But I'd give a good deal to get Topsy back," he said wistfully.

Ted studied the little glade intently for a few minutes, and a smile broke over his face.

"I've got it, Silver!" he cried. "This glade is just the place. I'll ask uncle to let Pete help me," he ran on, more to himself than his companion.

"What are you planning, boy?" old Silver asked.

"Can't you see how easily it can be done?" he cried wonderingly.

"I might, if you would explain a trifle," he replied smiling.

"I forgot," he apologized. "Well, then, I'll run a brush fence around three sides of this glade, and then drive Topsy and the stallion in here and close up the other side."

"That's a good idea, boy, and a reasonable one," the old man said, becoming enthusiastic over the thought of capturing the stallion and getting his loved Topsy back again. "This is just the place to do it, too. A horse can't jump uphill very well, you know. If you once get him in here, boy, he is yours, sure. Doggone it! I wish I was twenty years younger," he cried, his old eyes kindling with the fire of youth.

"Why, Silver, you'll be a big help; and we'll get him, sure," the boy replied earnestly; and the words and tone warmed the old man's heart. Then, glancing to where the sun was dipping well over the hills, he said: "We had better be going now, or I'll not get home in time to bring the sheep up before dark."

Silver cast a lingering glance over the hill where Topsy had disappeared, and then turned to Ted.

"I wish you had missed that buck, boy. We can't carry him home now, and I hate to kill anything in the abundance of the great privileges God has given us. We must not ruthlessly slay his creatures," he said reverently.

"Well, I'm glad I didn't miss him and I'm going to take him as far as your cabin home. I certainly can't think of leaving him here for the buzzards to get."

"How will you manage it, boy? The pony can't carry you and the buck, too."

"Dan will carry you and the guns, and I'll carry the buck," Ted replied.

"No, boy, I would not think of taking your horse. I'm used to tramping the hills, and it's only a couple of miles, you know."

"So am I used to tramping, and I feel just in the right mood for it now. You will ride Dan for me."

"No, boy," the old hermit remonstrated. "I'll feel better to walk. Let Dan carry the buck, and we'll both walk."

"Oh, Silver, you're tired now, while I feel as though just beginning the day."

"But you can't carry that big buck. The horns alone would make a fair-sized load."

"That's nothing! I could carry two like him and never feel it. See?" and he lifted the old man as though he were a doll, and set him in the saddle. "If we stand here arguing any longer, the sun will be down before we get started," he explained laughingly.

The old man gazed at the boy with wonder and admiration.

"Boy! boy! You're a wonder!" he cried. "What man and the world has taken from you, God has made up a thousand times," he murmured brokenly.

Ted threw the big buck across his shoulders as though it were only a jack rabbit. He did not understand what the old man meant, and dismissed it from his mind as the childish prattle of an aged person.

Ted hurried along, for the sun seemed in a hurry to hide its face behind the hills, and there were the sheep to be brought into the corral for the night. Arriving at the hermit's cabin, with Dan close behind, he laid the buck on the grass near the door, and waited for Silver to dismount.

"Tired, boy?" the old man asked.

"Not a bit!" smiling at the other's look of wonder. "I'm sorry I can't stay and help dress him," indicating the carcass on the grass. "But I'll have to hurry along, or mother will be getting uneasy."

This interesting story will be continued in the next issue of the Ledger. During the coming months many great stories will appear in these columns. If you are not already a subscriber for this paper, it will repay you to send in a year's subscription. It costs you only $1.00, and you will never regret it. Let us hear from you at once.

* * *

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"All of them were sound asleep," said the purser with a wink to an accomplice, "and all of them were snoring. The noise was deafening."

"It must have been," said the correspondent; "but when I was a boy out in Cincinnati, Ohio, there used to be a whistling whale that lived in the ocean just in front of my father's house. His name was Ponto and he would answer to it—answer by whistling. You see, his blowhole was clogged with barnacles and every time he spouted he made a sound like a siren on a fireboat.

"Ponto was a great pet with all the ships that traded in and out of Cincinnati. The pilots got to know him, and when they were entering port and Ponto cruising about in the channel they would signal him and he would signal back, always answering the correct number of blasts. But he's dead now—poor old Ponto!

"One day there was a freighter coming in from Covington, Ky., and Ponto tried to pass her, headed out. But he got confused and gave the whistle for going to the port side when he meant the starboard, and the freighter ran him down and stove in four of his compartments, and he sank in nine minutes, whistling for help to the very last."

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